

# THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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WXY TO EXPAND ASTOR PLACE AND COOPER SQUARE

## Cube's New Square

Astor Place figures prominently in New York's collective imagination. It acquired that character thanks to its location and significance in

the city's cultural history, but as a series of public spaces, it's fairly uninspiring. In a coordinated effort between the departments of

Transportation and Parks and Recreation, a new plan is moving toward approval that would increase the amount of public **continued on page 8**



Delancy and Suffolk streets fall within SPURA.

DERRICK MEAD

FALLOW SINCE MOSES, CITY PROPERTY NOW UNDER SCRUTINY

## HOT LOT

Seven acres at the foot of the Williamsburg Bridge in Manhattan have the distinction of being the largest undeveloped plot of city-owned land below 96<sup>th</sup> Street. Mayors from Koch to Giuliani have tried and failed to set construction in motion on the property, a parking lot for 43 years, but recent developments indicate the Bloomberg administration may be the one to finally see a ground breaking. The Seward **continued on page 2**



COURTESY DS+R

## BROAD APPEAL

In fittingly dramatic fashion, on January 6 philanthropists Eli and Edythe Broad unveiled designs for their long-awaited, \$130 million museum on Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles. The project, designed by New York architects Diller Scofidio + Renfro (DS + R), is in parts both boisterous and restrained and has the capacity to help transform a street that has long attempted— **continued on page 8**

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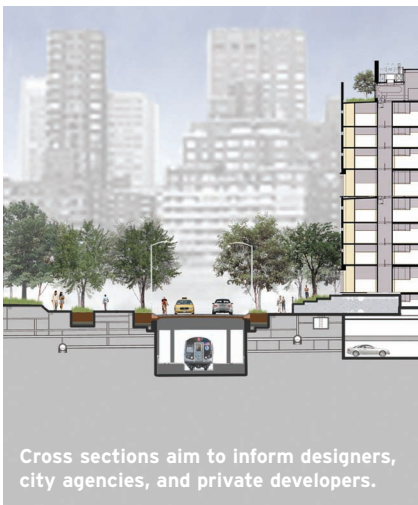
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Cross sections aim to inform designers, city agencies, and private developers.

COURTESY AECOM

PARKS AND DESIGN TRUST LAUNCH LONG-AWAITED GUIDELINES

## GREEN SCENE

A new manual providing sustainable park guidelines was launched at the Center for Architecture on January 6. Produced through a partnership between the Design Trust for Public Space and the Department of Parks and Recreation, *High Performance Landscape Guidelines: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Parks for NYC* is said to be the first document of its kind in the nation. The line to get into its launch stretched down the block, prompting Park Commissioner Adrian Benepe to dub the gathering "the Studio 54 of design." The manual, loaded **continued on page 5**

MMI DEBUTS IN QUEENS. SEE PAGE 6



PETER AARON/ESTO

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ITHACA, NY  
PERMIT  
No. 188

The Architect's Newspaper  
21 Murray St., 5th Floor  
New York, NY 10007



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VOLUME 09, ISSUE 02 FEBRUARY 2, 2011. THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER  
(ISSN 1552-9081) IS PUBLISHED 20 TIMES A YEAR (SEMI-MONTHLY EXCEPT  
THE FOLLOWING: ONCE IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY AND NONE IN AUGUST)  
BY THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER, LLC, 21 MURRAY ST., 5TH FL., NEW YORK,  
NY 10007. PRESORT-STANDARD POSTAGE PAID IN NEW YORK, NY.  
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JOINING FORCES

One of the great strengths of the architecture, planning and urban design community across the New York-region is the number of organizations, institutes, universities, think tanks, and public forums devoted to the form.

In addition to the great universities (from, say, Princeton to the south and Yale to the north) that are unparalleled anywhere in the world, the extended city has at least a dozen design-focused organizations that are surely the envy of other communities.

Institutions, such as Peter Eisenman's Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies and the AIA, which were both incubated here and then flamed out or moved elsewhere, have always played a decisive role in the intellectual life and culture of this city. The Architecture League, for example, was founded here in 1881, the Municipal Arts Society (MAS) in 1893, and the Van Alen Institute in 1894, and there were many more in the mid- and late-20<sup>TH</sup> century.

Though many of these institutions still thrive with devoted constituencies, followers, boards of directors, and funders, they still also compete against each other for a dwindling pot of financial resources. A few foundations like the Graham Foundation and J.M. Kaplan Fund every year try to sponsor as many as possible of the worthy architecture organizations to supplement monies Arts and The New York State Council on the Arts. But every year there seems to be less money from these state sources and organizations—that never had a robust fund-raising tradition to begin with—while wealthy directors on the board struggle to pay staff and continue vibrant programming. For all these established institutions like the Design Trust for Public Space and Storefront for Art and Architecture, fundraising becomes a fulltime activity for its staff and board even when there is a small endowment.

Then there are also newer organizations competing for the same public and private monies. One of these is Open House New York, which “celebrates New York City's architecture and design” through an annual October weekend of tours and smaller year-round educational programs focused on the built environment. OHNY lives on a mix of state and private monies but does not have the tradition or resources that the MAS or the Architecture League lean on; it must scramble for funding every year.

And now, I have taken on the role of president of OHNY. My principle role will be fundraising to help this organization, which already enjoys a deep well of public goodwill, keep its October tours free to the public. OHNY attracts over 200,000 people a year to its various programs, and its website gets a phenomenal eight million viewers per annum. A constituency is out there, and my job will be to find these people and encourage them to open their wallets.

The organization is now planning its annual spring fundraiser for May 28. I hope you will support OHNY, perhaps through the ACE (Architecture, Contractors and Engineers) Circle, a new donors with benefits group I am establishing. I'll be in touch!

**WILLIAM MENKING**

**HOT LOT** continued from front page

Park Area, or SPURA, as it has been dubbed, was created in 1967 by Robert Moses, who razed a total of 14 blocks of tenements to make way for the proposed Lower Manhattan Expressway. The Seward Park Cooperative housing projects, however, were all Moses was able to complete on this site, south of Delancey Street in the Lower East Side, at the waning of his career.

Under the guidance of facilitator John Shapiro, Community Board 3 released a draft of guidelines for SPURA on November 16, 2010, with mixed-use stipulations and 40-60 percent of the ensuing 1,000 housing units to be sold at market-rate values. CB3 Chairman Dominic Pisciotta later told *The New York Times* these guidelines were “the furthest it's ever come.” Yet within the community, obstacles to consensus remain, from the number of residential units reserved for low- and moderate-income tenants to the price of the land itself, which at \$60 million some say is far too low.

New York State assembly speaker Sheldon Silver, first elected to the downtown 64<sup>th</sup> district in 1974, has served through multiple plans for SPURA, including a 2006 mixed-use design by Arquitectonica, but has yet to weigh in on the latest. In a statement released last month, the speaker said, “I have great respect for the members of Community Board 3 and for the process that is taking place to form a consensus about the future of Seward Park. I think it is important to allow that process to be completed before commenting.”

On January 24, CB3's Land Use Committee voted in favor of the proposed planning guidelines. The breakdown shifted slightly in favor of affordable housing, now at 50 percent including 20 percent dedicated to low income and another ten for low income, senior. The audience was packed, among them a few who had originally been displaced by Moses in the 1960s and would like to be guaranteed housing opportunities to return.

The full board was scheduled to vote on the following day as *AN* went to press. It seemed likely that approval would result. In a statement, Silver praised the progress being made, writing that “the guidelines which were approved by the committee tonight strike an appropriate balance between the needs and concerns of all stakeholders and will result in a development that will ensure our neighborhood continues to thrive.”

Once approved, the guidelines will be submitted to various city agencies for review, a process which could take up to 2 years. Even at that glacial pace, Mayor Bloomberg could wield the golden shovel at SPURA yet.

**DERRICK MEAD**

LETTERS

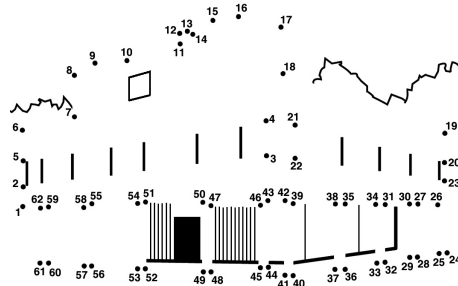
**OVERINFLATED ECO**

Isn't it about time we (you?) looked a little more closely at various green awards for architects? You report, without comment (May 19, 2010 issue is one famous example), that Michael Graves and Associates got a Gold Plus Award in a Green Mark program

for a mega-project on an island off the coast of Singapore, a project that has a 45,000 car garage, and is “designed to be energy efficient for both daytime and night-time activities,” “with eco-coolers [sic] blasting chilled air [to] keep outside areas comfortable.” Shouldn't there be a little

investigation as to what's going on?

**PETER MARCUSE**  
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## AUF WIEDERSEHEN, ANDRES

Don't call him a one-hit wonder even if **Andres Lepik**, curator of architecture and design at MoMA, is already heading back to Berlin, just weeks after the closing of his single major show, "Small Scale, Big Change," which was well received by critics and enthusiastically attended by the public, a rare double whammy. In an email, Lepik said he'd be spending the Spring editing a book and free-lancing with "no fixed position yet." As for who, when, or even if, his position will be filled, he did not know.

## CIAO, TRON

And speaking of April surprises, architect-and-designer-turned-*TRON: Legacy* filmmaker **Joseph Kosinski** is going to Milan Design Week. The angle? Space-age polymers! DuPont is partnering with Disney to present "TRON designs CORIAN," an exhibition inspired by the film. Expect a smoothy Corian landscape as well as commissioned installations by a to-be-announced group of architects and designers. Closer to home, Corian has colonized the lobby of the Bronx Museum of the Arts with an installation by **Vito Acconci** and team who cut, slit, gouged, braided, and rolled the material and then battered it with projected images and the shadows of passersby for "Lobby-for-the-Time-Being," up through June 6.

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GARY MEER

### ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP DISPUTES RECYCLING BENEFITS OF COAL ASH

## DUST-UP WITH EPA

A review conducted by independent nonprofit groups Environmental Integrity Project (EIP), Earthjustice, and the Stockholm Environment Institute's U.S. Center at Tufts University, asserts that the EPA grossly overestimated the value of coal ash recycling, possibly preventing the passage of tougher regulations for the handling and disposal of fly ash and other coal combustion byproducts.

Prompted by the Tennessee Valley Authority's massive fly ash sludge spill in 2008, the EPA's 2010 announcement of a proposal to designate coal byproducts as hazardous waste caused an industry outcry. Opponents say the move would jeopardize several sectors that rely on recycled fly ash, an ingredient often present in building materials like wallboard and concrete. In response, the EPA's regulatory proposal included a second option through which coal byproduct disposal would be

regulated by the states.

Now, the EIP and its partners have released a new study. Using the EPA's own empirical data, it finds that the agency's estimate of recycling coal combustion residue results in annual life-cycle benefits at almost \$23 billion is wholly inaccurate. Their analysis suggests an annual benefit of only \$1.15 billion—20 times less. The group said the discrepancy arises from the government's wish to appease industry stakeholders by pushing through weaker regulations, in light of the favorable cost-benefit analysis.

"Unfortunately, EPA and OMB just got this wrong," said Environmental Integrity project director Eric Schaeffer in a release. "The 'regulatory impact analysis' prepared by EPA to support its proposal exaggerates the economic life-cycle value of coal ash recycling, which could end up stacking the deck in favor of the weaker regulatory

option favored by industry."

In the report published in late December, analysts said the EPA's findings were faulty because they overestimated the amount of fine particle emissions prevented by recycling, and miscalculated the energy savings realized by recycling ash from cement kilns. The report also states that the agency's numbers discount the quantifiable benefits of stricter standards, instead placing a huge dollar value on the stigma accompanying a hazardous waste designation for coal byproducts.

Stakeholders remain divided over whether a hazardous waste designation would help or hurt the industry. Though it is the only way for the EPA to obtain nationwide oversight, many use the current success and efficiency of existing state-mandated recycling programs as an argument against federal involvement.

Environmentalists, though, will see passage of weaker regulations as a win for the coal industry, arguing that another catastrophic sludge spill is imminent without stricter government controls. "It should come as no surprise that requiring safe landfills for coal ash is less costly than allowing ash dumps to contaminate water in hundreds of communities around the country," said Earthjustice staff attorney Abigail Dillen. "What is surprising, in the face of this major public health threat, is that the books are being cooked to accommodate the coal industry."

JENNIFER K. GORSCHKE



PAUL BRISSMAN

### > RED ROOSTER

310 Lenox Avenue  
Tel: 212-792-9001  
Artists: Andres Gomez,  
Stephen Burks, Rebekah Maysles

Perhaps best known for his contemporary take on Swedish cuisine at New York's Aquavit, Top Chef winner Marcus Samuelsson's newest restaurant, Red Rooster, celebrates American comfort food as well as the culinary traditions of the surrounding Harlem neighborhood. The design process was largely an in-house effort, though the Red Rooster team did collaborate with noted local artists and designers, including Andres Gomez, Stephen Burks, and Rebekah Maysles. The amber, burgundy, cream, and brown hues of the interior are a nod to Harlem's historic churches and brownstones. A Norman Rockwell print on the wall lets visitors know that the slightly nostalgic Americana theme doesn't stop with the food. The space between the curvy, copper-topped mahogany-and-oak bar and dining area is knit together by a Bisazza glass tile floor. Brass fixtures, antique light fittings, and use of copper throughout the space give it a hint of deco combined with a dose of country comfort. Framing the open kitchen is a black wall filled with white, chalk-like scrawls (including the name of Samuelsson's Swedish grandmother, Helga Jonsson), recipes, and doodles that tell the story of Samuelsson's journey to take Red Rooster from dream to reality. **ALYSSA NORDHAUSER**

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MICHAEL MORAN

## HEAVY METAL LIGHTENS UP

As the dust cleared following September 11, the poor state of the Financial District's public spaces revealed itself to the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation. The LMDC responded by commissioning a strategic plan for 900 acres east of the World Trade Center site from Smith-Miller + Hawkinson Architects (SMH), who quickly began preparing a Strategic Open Space (SOS) plan that called for rethinking a network of pedestrian spaces. The nearly decade-long process has culminated in a revamped Louise Nevelson Plaza.

By evaluating pedestrian and automobile flows, parking, and privately owned public spaces (POPS), SMH identified the small "bowtie" plaza among five public spaces with the potential to transform the increasingly residential neighborhood. "We really wanted to encourage people to go down there, because the area was dying," said Laurie Hawkinson, a principal at SMH. "Many public spaces were being illegally closed for fear of crime and terrorism, and new residents were being squeezed out of their own city."

Renovations at Louise Nevelson Plaza

were folded in with a plan to reconstruct Maiden Lane and Liberty Street, overseen by the NYC Department of Design and Construction. Hawkinson remembers that it was initially daunting to design a public space to be built by a road contractor, especially in the days before the transformative thinking of reigning DOT Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan. Even though a segment of Maiden Lane could not be absorbed into the plaza as initially hoped, the end results maximize a small space with softened landscaping and delicate glass benches.

Site-specific statues by namesake sculptor Louise Nevelson remain the central focus of the space, with the largest piece at 70 feet tall situated above a shallow plinth that doubles as a stage. All seven Cor-ten steel sculptures have been refurbished and reinstalled in the exact positions Nevelson chose when the plaza opened in 1978.

Previously crowded with overgrown landscaping and bulky stone benches, the new design promotes dynamic use by residents with an emphasis on opening up the plaza. That spatial lightness is reinforced with an indirect lighting scheme and glass benches, which offer a foil to the heavy sculptures. Lit from beneath and supported by stainless steel trusses, the benches' 3-inch-thick glass slabs glow gently at night. "The lighting helps to make the space playful," said Hawkinson.

But for all its openness, the plaza is still situated in a financial capital, and the adjacent Federal Reserve bank required a guardhouse. Hawkinson sought to minimize the structure's presence by tucking it in a stealthy black granite box on the plaza's north side, where it would not be intrusive. "We worked really hard to make Louise Nevelson Plaza a little gem in all this craziness of Lower Manhattan." **BRANDEN KLAYKO**



COURTESY USPS

### INDUSTRIAL DESIGNERS ARE GOING POSTAL

## Stamps of Approval

Raymond Loewy built his reputation on making the machinery of daily life sleek and seductive. The industrial designer patented his streamlined pencil sharpener in 1934, and despite never making it into production, the object's bullet-like curves are about to be immortalized by the United States Postal Service (USPS). Pioneers of American Industrial Design, a new stamp collection to be released in July, highlights some of the most iconic designers and product designs of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But the sheet of stamps only has 12 spots. Who decided which objects (and creators) made the cut?

AN has learned that industrial designer Niels Diffrient was a key consultant in the process, advising USPS art director Derry Noyes (daugh-

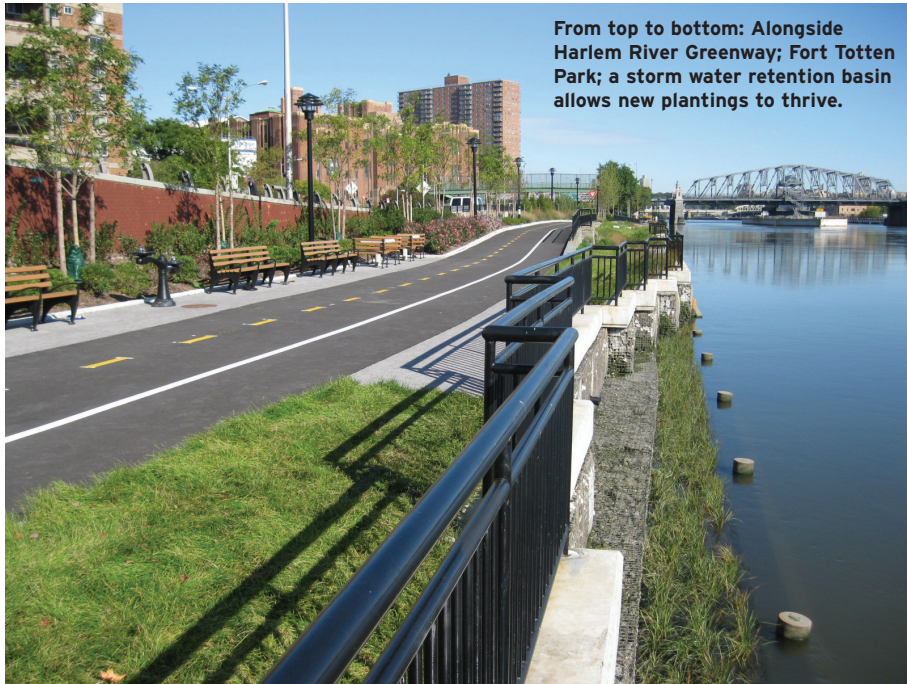
ter of architect and designer Eliot Noyes, one of the 12 to be featured) and stamp designer Margaret Bauer on the selection. "Our original thinking was to settle on the big names—Mies, Breuer, Gropius—but Niels helped us to focus more on American designers," said Bauer. Early in his career, Diffrient (winner of a 2002 National Design Award for product design) worked in the office of Henry Dreyfuss, whose iconic desk telephone for Bell is part of the new collection.

With an eye toward more industrial products than artisanal items like tableware, the selection team sought to capture the spirit of industrial design's most influential figures. Some choices were obvious—in addition to Loewy and Dreyfuss, Bauer says designers Norman Bel Geddes and Donald Deskey were no-brainers—but rounding out the 12 slots was a challenge. Greta von Nessen is the only woman of the group, although the team considered other female designers such as Eva Zeisel. But, like Zeisel, some of these design pioneers may not have met the primary requirement for U.S. stamp stardom: They're not dead.

Tucker Viemeister, an industrial designer who leads the Lab at Rockwell Group, notes that women are relative newcomers to the profession and deems the selection a solid mix of key designers and products. "Industrial design was really the first kind of geeky profession," said Viemeister, reflecting on the male-dominated early days and highlighting a trait that stamp collectors and designers may have in common. "Gearheads in their garage making stuff? We invented geeks."

**BK AND MOLLY HEINTZ**





From top to bottom: Alongside Harlem River Greenway; Fort Totten Park; a storm water retention basin allows new plantings to thrive.

THOMAS LUNKE



MICHAEL MORAN/COURTESY NANCY OWEN STUDIO

**GREEN SCENE** continued from front page with bullet points, provides clear checklists for administrators, designers, contractors, and maintenance staff on how to build and maintain sustainable parks. After walking the reader through site assessment and analysis, the report moves on to design before tackling construction and upkeep. The book's major thrust centers on a section called "Best Practices in Site Process," which divides its focus between soil, water, and vegetation. The manual culminates in a series of case studies that employ the book's principles. "The most important part is the applications," said Benepe. "It's a very hands-on document."

"I like to think of it as the Strunk and White of park design," said Charles McKinney, principal urban designer for Parks, invoking the beloved style bible of writers. He added that one

major motivation was to "make manifest a shared set of values" within the department and beyond. As Parks is the only city agency that designs, manages, and maintains their properties, the institutional knowledge presented will likely be useful to other agencies, like the Department of Transportation, which now manages newly allocated pedestrian plazas in Times and Herald squares. Jeannette Compton, a Design Trust fellow, said that a city-wide manual encompassing all the various agencies' needs would probably prove unwieldy, but their overlapping goals could easily be found within the guidelines. "They may not be Parks' properties, but they're parks in spirit," she said.

Design Trust executive director Deborah Marton believes the sharing of information remains particularly important within the depart-

ment, especially between those who design the parks and those who maintain them. "If we're going to be serious about this, then the people who care for the parks have to understand why they are the way they are," she said, referring to the current formula for less pristine and more plant-rich parks. What might look like weeds to the untrained eye could actually be filtration wetland.

For many years, an oral tradition dominated the way things got done at Parks. McKinney said that with staff preoccupied with completing the business at hand, there was little time left to write it all down. The Design Trust made it possible to bring in experts from the outside and implement a peer review process. "There were certain areas outside of our purview, like soils," he said, adding that that effort also provided a framework for the agency to draw expertise from within the agency as well.

With the manual online at nyc.govparks.org, the creators see it as a living document. "No one believes that some of the stuff we put forward won't become outdated. It's a working document," said Benepe. "It's a very big tent that these things fall under, but the document will help institutionalize what we are doing."

**TOM STOELKER**



COURTESY VERIDIA

# GRASS ROUTES



Creating green space in New York is not always a walk in the park. Challenged with drawing activity to its campus from 65<sup>th</sup> Street, **Lincoln Center** commissioned **Diller Scofidio + Renfro** and **FXFOWLE** to design a restaurant that would allow street life and arts events to come together, enlivening pedestrian paths while adding valuable public space. The team's unique solution was an elegant parabolic-roofed pavilion that grows out of the Center's plaza, creating a lawn for those who wish to lounge, and a canopy for those who wish to lunch. Steel's slender, lightweight profile made the project possible by enabling the structure to bear on existing foundations, a new stage among many that give the performing arts center its life.

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PETER AARON/ESTO

Oh, to live in the unbuilt world of Thomas Leiser! While most architects have by mid-career accumulated a village of unrealized projects, all offering glimpses of unbuildable wonders or cancelled near-misses, Leiser's exceptional collection features unbuilt buildings that seem at once otherworldly and down-to-earth. With a long-refined vocabulary of tessellated-panel cladding, continuous-curve surfacing, laconically sculptural massing, knife-sharp edging, and a certain icy taste for sparkle, his practice has produced an evanescent architecture for a counterfactual world, more exciting and exacting than our own: For Yakutsk, Russia, a woolly mammoth museum whose facade tessellations extrude into leggy permafrost-foundation piles, all with the irresistible creaturely charisma of the animal it exhibits; for Abu Dhabi, a hotel whose voluptuous curves manifest as Wright's Guggenheim in full ballroom spin; for Heidelberg, Germany, there's a solid-looking museum that, at least seemingly, melts into air.

Now, remarkably, one of those projects has found its way into the real world; like many recent arrivals from exotic realms, it lives in Queens, New York. It's an addition to the Museum of the Moving Image, a shiny renovation of the existing interior along with a theater and screening room, and three new stories at the back, enrobed in a rounded and inscribed aluminum facade. The museum is a worthy city-run gallery of film and television, housed since 1988 in a surprisingly swanky complex of former studios and backlots built

by Paramount Pictures in the 1920s.

Setting aside that old saw about frozen music, architecture and cinema are the most intimately conspiratorial of arts, the formal language for the latter having been established by that notably failed architect, Sergei Eisenstein. And within the context of the moving image, Leiser's architectural vocabulary has an acute critical relevance. The seamless surfaces that curve from floor to ceiling before splicing into deep re-entrant corners and incisions—these recall the long steady-cam tracking shot that immerses the filmgoer in a borrowed world. The rectilinear openings and tubular ramps that cut into those smooth surfaces to provide circulation and services—these recall the classic thumbs-and-forefingers framing of the cinema screen, and the startling displacements of a jump-cut montage. The color palette enhances these effects, with a bright white interrupted by shocks of red, and illuminated by concealed LEDs of retina-blasting blue.

For the tectonically fastidious, these gestures might be more *moderne* than modern: the coating in seamless white of a diverse assortment of plasters and resins and composites and metals suppresses a desirable legibility of how these different materials are deployed. But this privileging of visual effects is complemented by an economy of means in both programming and detailing: a stray cove underneath the banked seating of a second-floor theater becomes a lobby seating area of cunning grandeur; a handrail in a screening room doubles as a visually white-hot light-catcher, seeming to glow as it bounces

the illumination of an otherwise banal fluorescent concealed nearby. That second-floor main theater is an attenuated icosahedron lined with blue felt panels. The linear gaps between those panels, arrayed at the same scale and harlequin pattern as the aluminum panels outside, challenge the eye's reading of the form and edges of that volume to transporting effect. (For what is presumably the price of mere meters of their signature luminous tropical hardwood, the admittedly much smaller Blue Theatre strongly recalls the most instrumental effects of Diller Scofidio + Renfro's contemporary Alice Tully Hall, with similar felt walls, cove lighting, panelized extremities, and demi-hexagonal geometry in plan and section.) Much of what distinguishes Leiser's project, like surprising sightlines and hardworking shadow gaps, is achieved, as it were, for free. After navigating funding cuts and schedule delays, it reportedly arrived right on budget, doubling the museum's size to some 100,000 square feet for a surprising \$67 million. And, as they say in Hollywood, all the money is up on the screen.

Although glazing at both ends of the long lobby draws light deep into the floor plate, the interior lacks a soaring see-and-be-seen space worthy of this scrappy museum's ambition and mission. But a densely woven cross-section, and frequent double-programming of shared circulation, exhibition, and projection spaces, packs a remarkable amount of punch into a smallish total volume. Much of the addition provides circulation space to galleries

**Thomas Leiser's addition with its painstakingly-placed aluminum panels rounding every edge.**

embedded in the historic Paramount building, which combine discursive exhibits and high-tech new media with charmingly hokey ephemera like an original puppet prop of *Star Wars*' Yoda, somewhat worse for wear at age 931.

The addition works because, unlike the hermetically bombastic work of many would-be Yodas of the architecture galaxy, it poses not as a prophetic artifact from an as-yet unbuilt world, but integrates itself with a surprising combination of swagger and subtlety into an existing architecture, and into the virtual and actual landscapes of the cinema it houses and the city it inhabits. On a recent evening, a screening in that blue theater of *2001* yielded an uncanny convergence: a view of stars framed by the door of a space station's landing bay aligned precisely with the rectangle of the screen, which in turn aligned with the lateral cross-section of the theater itself; as Kubrick's camera pulled back into the depth of the bay, that space suddenly became, by single-point-perspective alignment, a telescoping extension of the theater, launching the audience deep into the heavens. Downstairs, snow from a recent blizzard drifted against a glittering window-wall, blended seamlessly with the ice-white floors, and by juxtaposition and reflection sent that same audience through the looking glass, through the silver screen, out into the night. **THOMAS DE MONCHAUX**



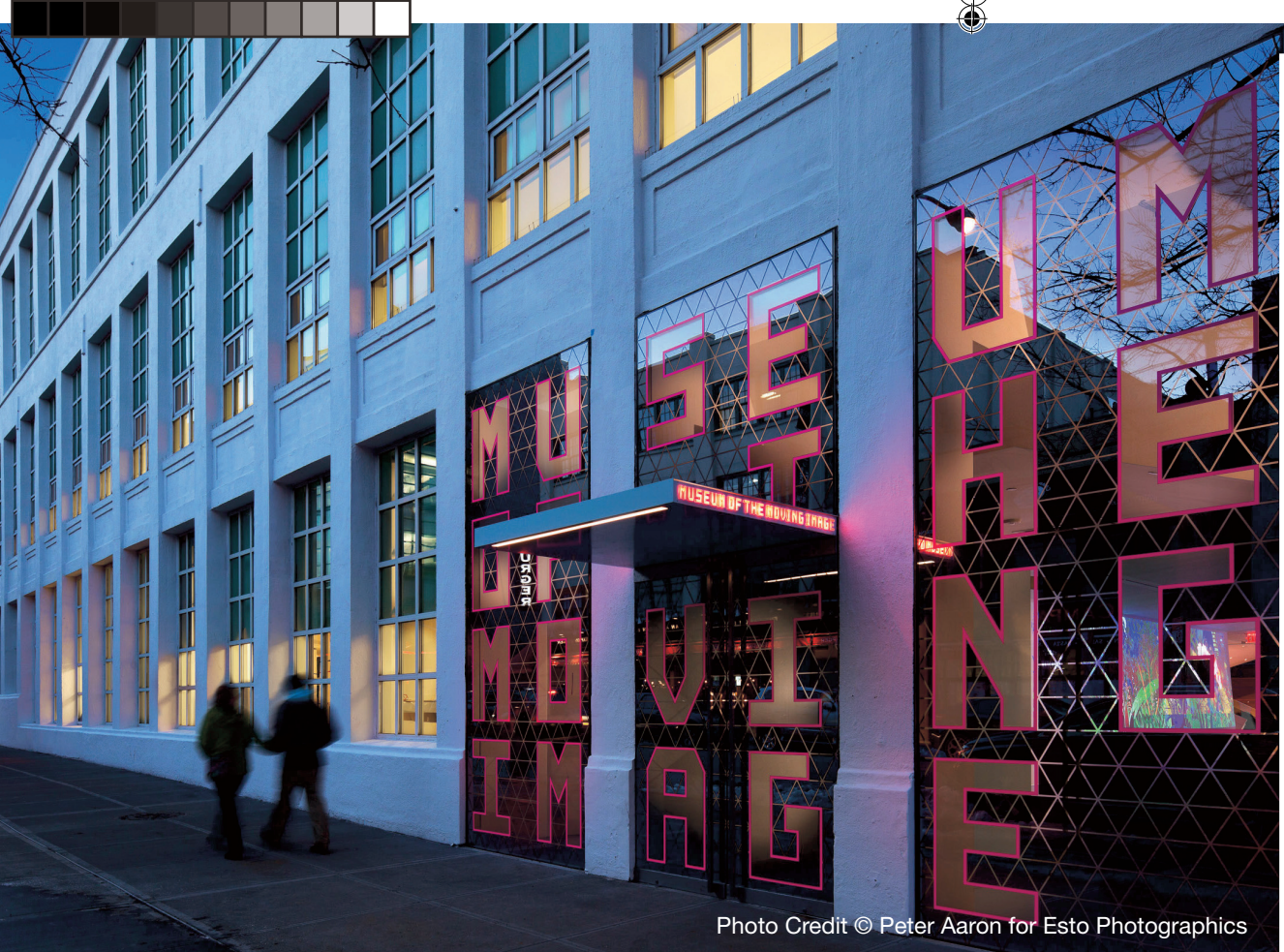


Photo Credit © Peter Aaron for Esto Photographics

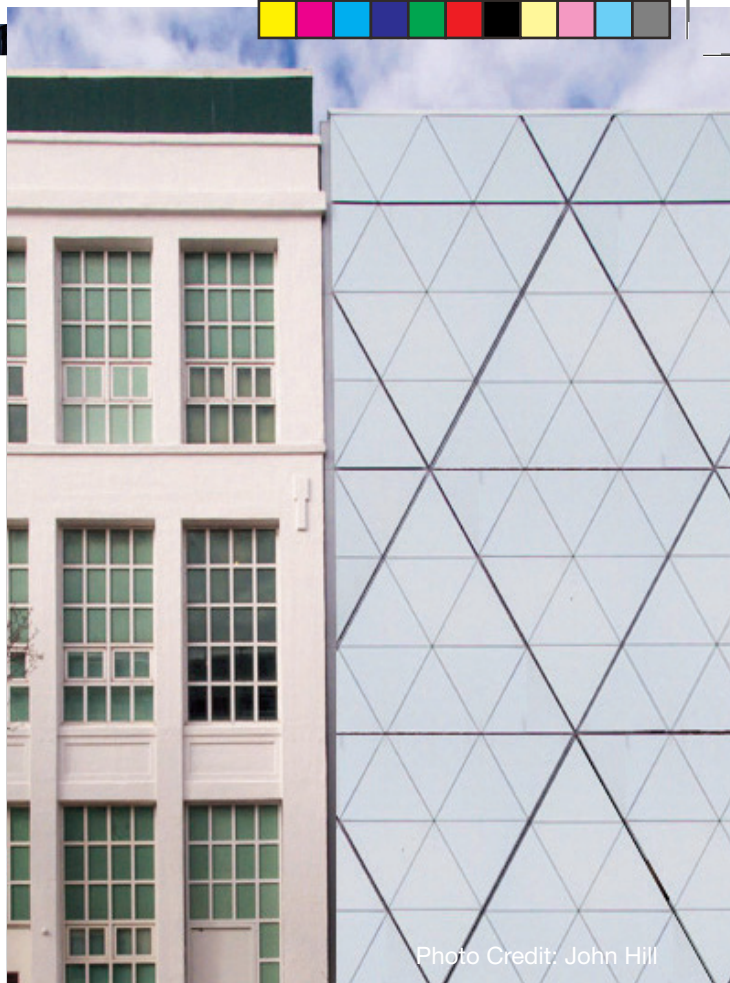


Photo Credit: John Hill



Photo Credit © Peter Aaron for Esto Photographics

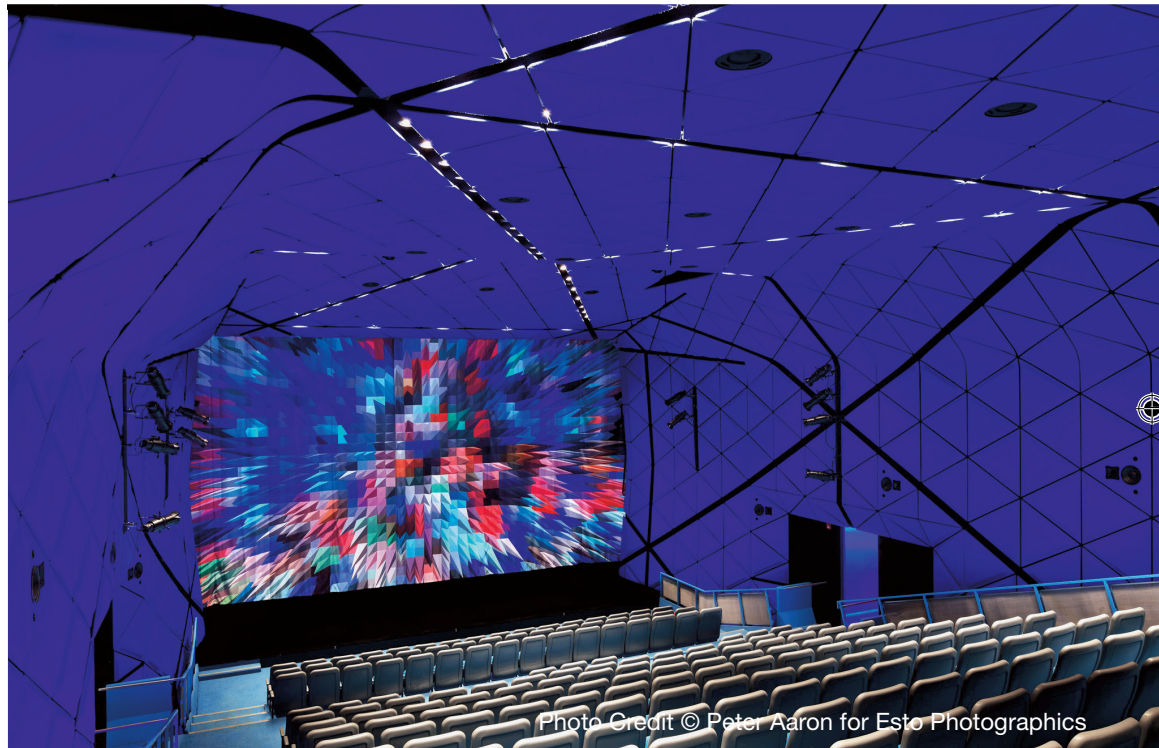


Photo Credit © Peter Aaron for Esto Photographics

# Museum of the Moving Image

Architect: Leeser Architecture

Owner's Representative: Levien & Company

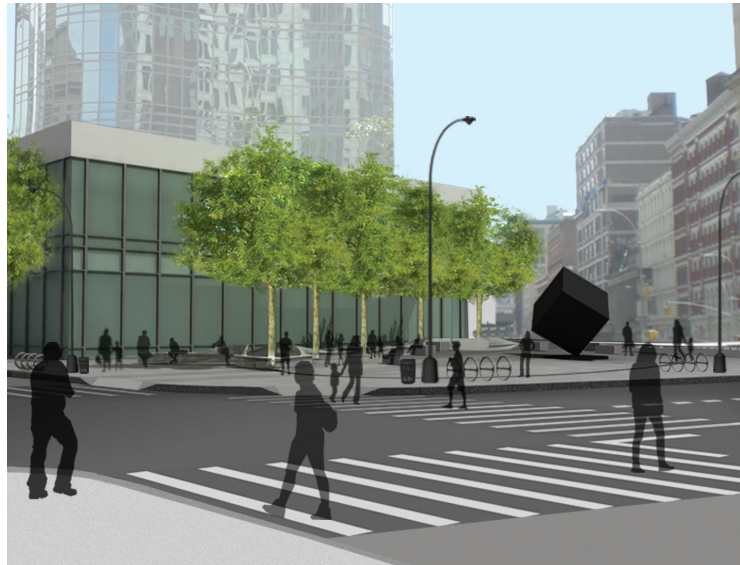
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER FEBRUARY 2, 2011



**CUBE'S NEW SQUARE** continued from front page space, improve storm water drainage, and increase the amount of planting, all while attempting to preserve the area's informal, spontaneous atmosphere.

Designed by WXY architecture + urban design with Quennell Rothschild & Partners landscape architects, the project area includes the two plaza segments at Astor Place, Cooper Square, the areas south to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, and all sidewalks connecting them. Arguably the biggest change will be the closure of Astor Place itself to traffic, creating a large plaza in front of the Gwathmey Seigel-designed mirrored condominium building.

This plaza, which contains the famous Tony Rosenthal sculpture *Alamo*—colloquially known as “The Cube”—will be left largely open, but the plaza's surface will be subtly contoured to direct rainwater into a bio-swale and stand of trees at the southern end of the plaza. The Cube will be moved about six feet westward to create a new view corridor. “We want The Cube to be visible coming from Union Square,” said Claire Weisz, a principal at WXY. “We also want to preserve the feeling of open-endedness, so that Astor Place is still a site where spontaneous performances and unplanned encounters can happen.”



Across 8<sup>th</sup> Street, the plaza with the subway entrance will also be expanded. New trees will be added, as well as benches of informally stacked blocks of stone. A large oak tree—like those found at Cooper Square—will anchor the plaza at the southeast corner. It, too, will feature a bio-swale and improved storm water management. A similar large oak will be planted caddy corner from the front of the Cooper Union Foundation Building.

Cooper Square will be expanded, and feature lushly planted beds by Piet Oudoff and benches lining its perimeter. The existing oaks and monument will be preserved. “The language will be a bit more

traditional at Cooper Square,” Weisz said, in deference to its more historic character.

Additional trees will line both sides of a significantly narrowed 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Near the juncture of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> avenues, where a series of scraggly street trees and narrow medians now stand, an expansive plaza will be created along the west side of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This space, near the entrance to a new private high school being opened by nearby Grace Church, will be left largely unprogrammed, with the exception of another new stand of trees. “We want it open for interpretation,” Weisz said. Fourth Avenue, which currently meets 3<sup>rd</sup> on the diagonal,



From left: A closed Astor Place gives more space to the cube; new plaza south of Cooper Square; Cooper Square looking east (top); subway entrance at Astor Place.

creating a wide, wedge-shaped expanse of roadway, will be redirected into a curve. The new plaza will be carved from the former roadbed.

For the designers, the project is a showcase of what can be done within the framework of the city's new street design guidelines. “It's a real deployment of all the new techniques,” Weisz said.

ALAN G. BRAKE

**BROAD APPEAL** continued from front page and largely failed—to be a vibrant cultural hub for the city. It will be home to the Broads' collection of over 2,000 contemporary artworks, as well as to the offices of the Broad Foundation.

“We're convinced that Grand Avenue is where it's at,” said Eli Broad, who has played a significant role in much of the street's distinctive architecture, including Coop Himmelb(l)au's Performing Arts High School, Arata Isozaki's MOCA, and, of course, Disney Hall.

DS + R, well known for its work on Boston's Institute for Contemporary Art and New York's High Line and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, among other influential projects, has created a design that in many—although not all—ways embraces Downtown LA, adding visual energy and welcoming people inside.

The three-story, 120,000-square-foot building is essentially a traditional steel-framed box wrapped in what the firm calls “the veil,” an intriguing honeycomb of interconnecting structural concrete trapezoids. At the press conference, DS + R's Elizabeth Diller pointed out that the veil will allow passersby to peek inside the building, while allowing art viewers to peer outside. Diller added that the veil's design originated as a response to the highly expressive Disney Hall, which sits next to the new building. While Disney is shiny

and solid, The Broad, as the new museum will be called, will be porous and cellular. She said sponges and lava stones provided inspiration.

One enters the building through a “lift” of the veil, a large glass-clad cantilever on the corner of Grand Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street that's evocative of the entry to DS + R's Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. The opening will “blow a kiss to Disney,” joked Diller, and invite people to come into the lobby, a sculptural space that will be activated with a cafe, bookstore, and multimedia space. On the escalator ride up to the main galleries, one will process through a dramatic tunnel that pierces the “vault,” an interior space containing the museum's storage and archives. The foundation's offices and a lecture hall will also be contained on these intermediate floors. On the way down, a separate passageway will offer glimpses into the vault and the inner workings of the museum.

The top-floor galleries will contain 40,000 square feet of open, column-free exhibition space that takes advantage of the veil's construction to filter natural light in mesmerizing patterns. DS + R associate Kevin Rice noted that the firm is working with ARUP lighting designer Andy Sedgwick, the same consultant who has worked with Renzo Piano on many of his memorable skylights. Other partners in the project include executive architect Gensler.

Diller believes the building will add excitement to Grand Avenue and Downtown LA, but also tamps down expectations for its impact on the neighborhood. “It's only a step. It will not solve LA's problems,” she said. While the building's Grand Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue facades appear fairly active with their glassy fronts and widened sidewalks, its south and west elevations are still question marks. Those sides will have no public entrance and meet the street via the building's three-story parking garage.

Much depends on whether the city's huge Grand Avenue Project moves forward. That plan calls for plazas around the space, which could better connect the museum to the urban grid as well as to a new transit station. While many seem unsure if the new public space will come to pass, City Planner Simon Pastucha said that “it's a requirement, it's just a question of when.” When asked about the retail, restaurant, park, and hotel-rich Grand Avenue Project—hyped as the people-drawing complement to the street's institutional heft—Broad told *AN*, “It's delayed, but it's still going.”

But until that project is underway, The Broad—with its flashy architecture and \$2 billion collection—remains Grand Avenue's best hope for regeneration.

SAM LUBELL

## AT DEADLINE

## NO GRACE PERIOD

After winning a series of battles to save the Grace Episcopal Church Memorial Hall in Jamaica, Queens, preservationists lost the war. When the Landmark Preservation Commission designated their 1912 Tudor meeting hall a landmark, the congregation complained that the cost of maintaining the structure at city landmark standards was too much. Church leaders pulled in support from local Councilmembers, who overturned the LPC ruling in a 47 to 1 vote on January 18. While the City Council rarely overturns designations, the move sent a chilling message to preservations: it isn't designated till the Council says it's designated.

## DESIGN NYC ANNOUNCES 2011 MATCHES

DesignNYC, an organization that pairs nonprofits with designers, announced their matchups for 2011. Firms that applied last fall were selected by a persnickety panel of top industry names. The firms providing pro bono services for the not for profits are Vamos Architects, Rodrigo Corral, Abruzzo Bodiak Architects, Fogelson-Lubliner, OttoNY, 590BC with Studio L'Image, Language Department, architects Fink & Platt, and Publicis.

## FILM FACILITY AT NAVY YARD

In 2013 Brooklyn College will bring its film program to a state of the art commercial facility at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The school expects to rent space from Steiner Studios after they renovate the warehouse on the corner of Washington and Flushing avenues. The deal brings an infusion of \$90 million in state subsidies, \$65 million in private investment, and \$420 million in state tax credits. The mayor touted the hybrid project in his outerborough-centric State of the City address, calling the program “the first graduate-level film school of its kind.” The program provides students with hands-on studio experience and a chance to rub shoulders with big time players, as Steiner keeps their cameras rolling.



COOK + FOX  
AND CLINE  
BETTRIDGE  
BERNSTEIN  
LIGHTING  
DESIGN

One Bryant Park has its own distinctive identity on the night skyline. Top right and below: LED cove lights installed within the wall cavity at the spandrels. The LEDs are tuned to a cooler white than the interior, making the section stand out on the lantern-like building.

When the Durst Organization and Cook + Fox approached Cline Bettridge Bernstein Lighting Design (CBBLD) to execute the exterior lighting scheme for One Bryant Park, they already had a very clear idea of how they wanted their building to appear at night. The crystalline volume of the 55-story tower features a variety of facets, sliced away from the mass of the building, that orient views through the forest of midtown skyscrapers surrounding the structure. This is most apparent on the southeast exposure, which faces onto Bryant Park itself, where the corner of the building is cut away from the 22<sup>nd</sup> floor up through the parapet, creating an inverted triangular facade element. Here, the architects established a double curtain wall, the exterior glass surface forming the smooth plane seen from the street, while the interior is notched in plan to create additional corner office space. Cook + Fox and the developer both wanted this inverted triangle to glow at night—to shine out on the skyline even brighter than the lantern-like, already glowing glass tower. And of course, the job would have to be accomplished without exceeding the stringent energy requirements demanded to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

As tall as those marching orders may have been, they were not the last of the challenges that the project presented to CBBLD. The design team was impressed, and concerned,

by the minimalism of the structure and the clarity of the low-iron glass. These were great features for giving the tenants unobstructed views to the park and skyline, as well as for flooding the interiors with copious quantities of salubrious unfiltered daylight, but those same aspects made the space Teflon, so to speak, for electric lighting. There was nothing upon which the light could cling, no surface that would hold it and create the glowing effect the architects so desired. The joke around the office was that they would have to fill the cavity with smoke and shine light up through its hazy mantle for anyone to notice any illumination at all. Cook + Fox was unwilling to add anything to the structure or the glass itself that would impede the view/daylight continuum. Furthermore, they insisted that whatever fixtures CBBLD inserted into the space must not be visible from the interior.

In the end, the solution was quite simple. The architects wavered an inch from their transparency hard line and added a touch of translucent fritting on each exterior glass panel, high up where it wouldn't trouble the eye. It proved enough, however, to catch the light and create a subtle striated pattern of illumination on the exterior, an effect, after all, that even matched the romantic rendering first presented to CBBLD. To make the light, the team settled on high-output 15-watt LED

cove fixtures placed in the spandrel sections of the elevation, where they would be well out of sight. They also tuned the white LEDs to 5,000K, establishing a cooler light within the double wall that contrasts with the warmer, 3,000K-T5 fluorescent strip lighting on the building's interior.

As elegant as the solution was, it didn't work all the way up the elevation, where two other architectural conditions presented themselves—the mechanical floors, which run from 52 to 56, and the parapet, which goes from 57 to the sky. Cook + Fox wanted a consistency to the appearance of the lighting scheme in spite of these differences, and so CBBLD went about fabricating as close a facsimile of the office floors as was possible. The mechanical floors step back from the lower parts of the tower, and on the resultant ledges, the team inserted frosted glass panels. They backlit these with floor-mounted 58-watt T5 fluorescent lamps, tuned to the same 3,000K color temperature as the office lighting. Within the cavity created between the frosted panels and the exterior wall, the designers placed the same 5,000K LED fixtures as used on floors 21 through 51, only bracket-mounted rather than cove. This strategy created a similar depth and contrasting tone of light as below. The team also backlit the rest of the mechanical floor's facades, which are translucent glass, with 58 watt T5 fluorescent lamps, further reinforcing the consistency of lighting throughout the elevation of the building.

Lighting the parapet, which extends in some places as much as 50 feet above the roof, was an entirely different ballgame.

There would be no constructing of a backing wall of frosted glass, as on the mechanical zones. CBBLD also had to contend with the helter-skelter ambient light of nearby Times Square. The solution was to use 400-watt metal halide floodlights behind the double wall section to simulate the lighting provided by T5s below, and 269-watt metal halide up-lights paired with each vertical column of the glass wall to reproduce the effect handled by the LEDs. The remainder of the parapet was lit with 150-watt metal halide up-lights, again to establish consistency of light all the way to the tippy top of the tower.

Then there is the spire, which reaches a full 1,200 feet into the air. Cook + Fox and Durst felt this element should be lit in a changing array of colors, both to complete the overall architectural composition at night, and as a civic gesture on the skyline similar to that offered by the Empire State Building. In answer, CBBLD outfitted the spire, a sort of triangular vertical truss in form, with strategically placed 50-watt RGB color-changing LED up-light fixtures. The luminaires are linked to a DMX control station, allowing One Bryant's management to adjust the color on demand.

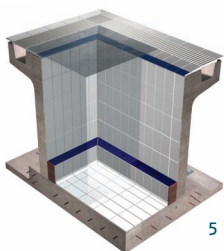
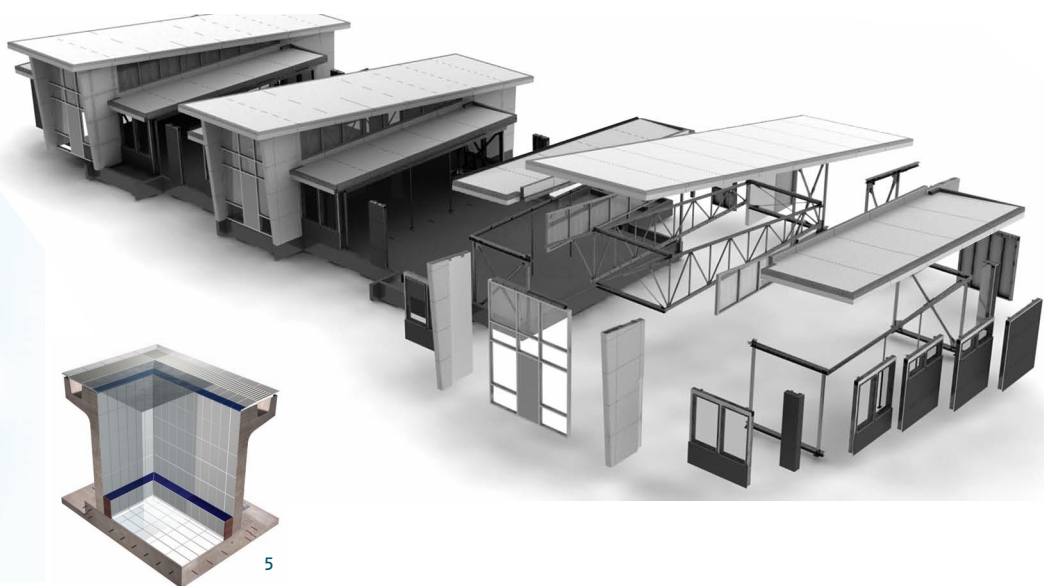
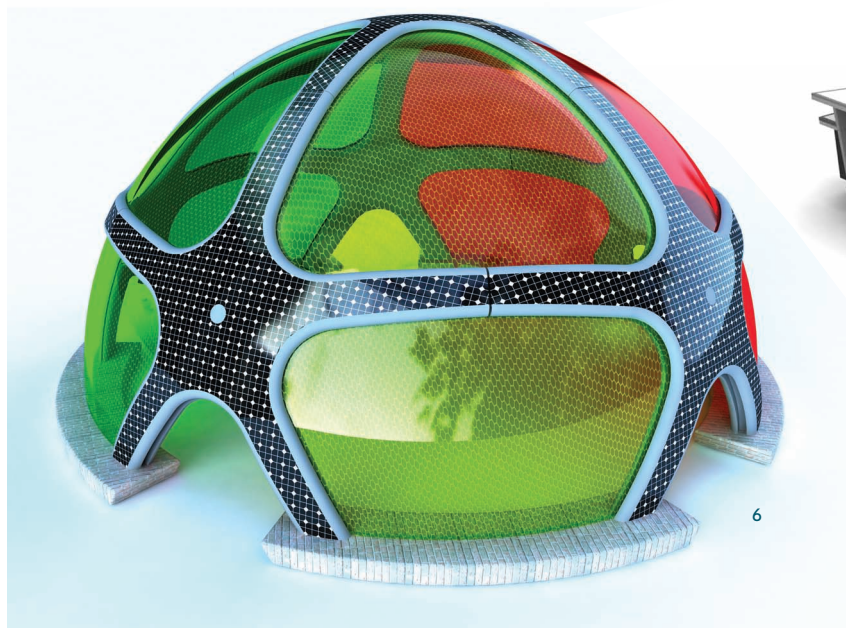
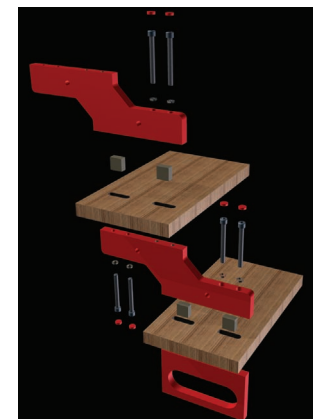
CBBLD also completed the lobby lighting scheme, though there is no room to discuss that here. Throughout the project, CBBLD counted every watt; there isn't an incandescent on the job. The watt-scrimping paid off. The lighting scheme helped the base building earn its LEED Platinum rating, and it did so without sacrificing a little splash on the exterior, proving that a building doesn't have to be boring to be green. **AARON SEWARD**



THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER FEBRUARY 2, 2011

# A LA MODULAR

NOT JUST FOR HOUSES, PREFAB DESIGNS THINK BEYOND THE BOX  
BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ



## 1 BOX KITCHEN FLETCHER CAMERON

A new product from kitchen design firm Fletcher Cameron, founded by Frank Lloyd Wright's great-granddaughter Christine Ingraham, the Box Kitchen is a prefabricated cabinet solution for kitchens, baths, and offices. Available in standard, legged, or wall-hung cabinet styles in 33 laminate colors and ten wood veneers, the cabinets come standard with soft-close, Euro-style hinges on solid maple or metal drawers. Components are fabricated in Connecticut and can be shipped nationwide. [www.boxkitchen.com](http://www.boxkitchen.com)

## 2 MODULAR STAIR ASCENDINGS

Introduced at the 2010 Build Boston show, Ascendings is a modular stair system consisting of CNC-machined aluminum components that can be prefabricated for a variety of straight and curved stair designs, with wood (produced by the Indiana company's Amish neighbors), metal, lightweight concrete, or glass treads. The system uses a patent-pending technology to replace stringers with individual aluminum pieces, making it ideal for remodel projects in which full-stair installation is difficult. [www.ascendings.com](http://www.ascendings.com)

## 3 SMART BUILDING KITS PROJECT FROG

Founded in 2006, smart-building manufacturer Project Frog is testing its next generation of designs in the Hawaiian Islands; a sample building kit is shown here. Working with the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute, the company will install a series of buildings designed for energy efficiency and sustainability throughout the islands, evaluating a new energy-neutral test platform at two climatically different locations, and testing the structural system and building envelope performance in the two environments. Alternative-energy generation technologies will also be evaluated. [www.projectfrog.com](http://www.projectfrog.com)

## 4 MODULAR HOMES ASUL

An acronym for the Adaptable System for Universal Living, ASUL homes use a material management system to source, prefabricate, and package construction materials for assembly from anywhere in the world, should they be unavailable at the building site. Design options include ten modular sizes, two deck and awning options, and three ceiling-height variations, with raised or slab-on-grade foundations. Homes may be built by the owner or ASUL, alone or collaboratively. [www.asul.us](http://www.asul.us)

## 5 SYSTEM 10 ROSA GRES

A new prefabricated system for constructing concrete overflow swimming pools quickly, the new Rosa Gres System 10 uses interlocking precast panels, with an integrated pool-surround drainage channel, to ensure a precisely finished, high-strength tank structure. Once the pool tank is complete, the system is waterproofed with a Hidroelastic membrane system, and tiled using the company's Ergo System range of porcelain pool tiles. [www.rosagres.com](http://www.rosagres.com)

## 6 ART.RAINBOW GUALENI DESIGN

A new conceptual model from Gualeni Design, ART.rainbow is a prefabricated, solar-powered pavilion composed of transparent composite sheets held together by a dome of modular elements fitted with solar panels. During the daytime, the structure is a light-filled space for gatherings; at night, LEDs within the ceiling use stored solar power to illuminate the interior. The "artificial rainbow" is available in any color scheme and can be customized to suit an event's needs. Production is anticipated. [www.dxtroy.com](http://www.dxtroy.com)





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## PROJECT PROFILE: HL23



VaproShield is proud to be part of acclaimed architect Neil Denari's HL23, an extraordinary, reverse-tapering architectural landmark in New York City.

The complex concrete and steel frame structure with windows over eleven feet high, demanded the most high performing vapor and air permeable weather resistant membrane in the industry: **WallShield®**.

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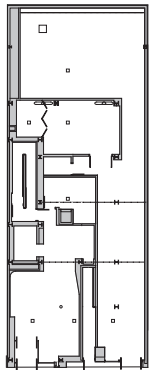
- Mechanically Attached or Self Adhered
- LEED Contributor
- Class A Fired-Rated
- ASTM E 2357.05 Approved
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- 100% Recyclable





HL23  
515-517 WEST  
23RD STREET  
NEIL M. DENARI  
ARCHITECTS

**Clockwise from top left:**  
Bands of marble in a bath-  
room; notched kitchen  
cabinetry; structural steel gets  
a more sinuous look thanks to  
fritted glass; tower on the High  
Line; a typical living space.



Julius Shulman's iconic photograph of the cantilevered, night-lit living room of Pierre Koenig's Case Study House #22—two women chatting with the lights of Los Angeles below—captured the essence of postwar modern living, California-style. Time will tell if the luxury perches of HL23 will prove as emblematic of the layered urbanism of 21<sup>st</sup>-century New York. Still, the Neil Denari-designed, 14-story building is sure to offer some of the best in-home people watching in the city, with endlessly fascinating views of the people on the High Line, as well as the changing foliage of the linear park, cars passing below, and the ever evolving skyline of far west Chelsea.

A freewheeling California spirit

echoes through the project's formal and structural dynamism, but also at a top-level, 1,000-square-foot penthouse entertaining room with a three-sided wraparound terrace. Custom 20-foot-long sheets of glass move on mechanized tracks on three sides, removing the boundary between indoor and outdoor living. But while the Case Study houses symbolized an accessible, leisurely lifestyle, the glass box atop HL23 epitomizes luxury living out of reach to all but the very few: There are 12 units. While the views out are sure to captivate potential buyers, the architect and developer have paid equal attention to the details within. Museum-quality white oak hardwood floors have a clear coat finish. Kitchens

are outfitted with contrasting charcoal gray-stained wood cabinets with notched pulls instead of hardware, beveled solid surface countertops, and a full complement of high-end appliances, including double ovens and 48-inch refrigerator/freezers. Custom mechanical shades rise from the floor to the ceiling, offering a buffer against voyeurism. The bathrooms are covered in massive slabs of marble, selected for their highly graphic veining (horizontal bands, splatter paint, dramatic book-matching) different in every unit. "I don't like the busy-ness of tile, and all the grout seams," Alf Naman, HL23's developer, told AN on a recent tour. "I love the purity of the slab." A material that has connoted luxury

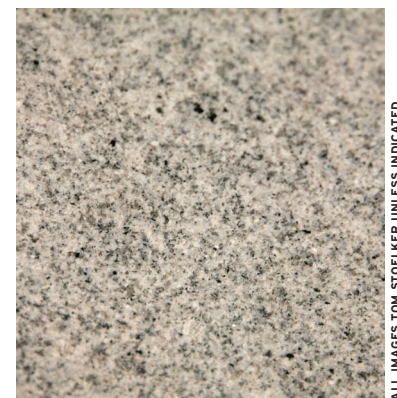
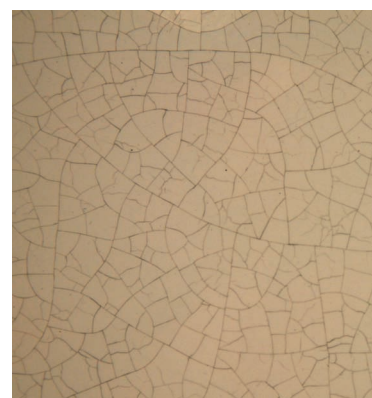
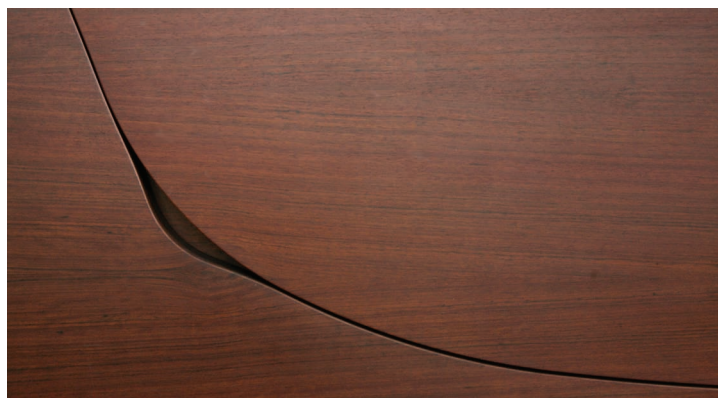
for centuries to the point of cliché, the marble here manages to look brand new. Rooms are laid out carefully, and so while the public areas are open and free flowing, bedrooms feel private, with bathrooms, closets, and discreet hallways, preventing shared walls. Careful planning extended to minimization of the service core, which Naman credits to architect of record Marc Rosenbaum. "When you can gain 12 inches here or there, it's worth all the effort. It means you can create more generous spaces," Naman said. When the building is complete, one hopes HL23 will also be photographed to capture how modern New Yorkers—some of them, at least—live now. **ALAN G. BRAKE**





**Clockwise from left:**  
Master bedroom with all-in-one storage/head-board; a tower of duplexes; granite tub; lava stone wall tiles in bathroom; a fold-away teak breakfast table.

## 200 11TH AVENUE SELLDORF ARCHITECTS



ALL IMAGES TOM STOELKER UNLESS INDICATED

The 16-unit condominium at 200 Eleventh took a long time to be completed, and not just because of the garage elevator that delivers cars directly to each apartment. Begun in 2006, there were stop-work orders, developer splits, media mauling, the usual residential real-estate mayhem, and then the economy collapsed. Now, with all four penthouses and the 2,400 square feet on average apartments—duplexes all—sold, the 19-story condominium designed by Annabelle Selldorf still looks impressively au courant.

That enduring freshness is thanks in part to the refined modern classicism that Selldorf practices. But it is also the result of her thorough understanding of the floor plan. At a time when it is fashionable to

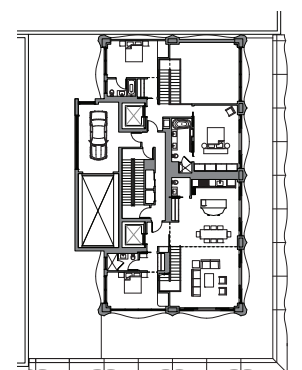
undermine expectations, throw in some curved walls, tight angles, and perhaps a window too high to reach, Selldorf has remained resolutely straightforward: “Maybe I am old-fashioned, but I am obsessed with floor plans. Others work on sections or 3D; I can’t visualize without a plan. It allows me to think about how to walk through and use a space—and that’s the beginning of everything.”

Selldorf makes spaces understandable in terms of everyday life—there is a place to hang a coat on entering, guests can go to a powder room without barging through a guest or children’s bedroom. She arrives at her floor plans, she said, using furniture layouts, and imagining lives as they unfold:

How would 12 people sit around the table. How would someone eat alone? “It’s layered work, perhaps even pedestrian—but I go over and over it until it is all worked out.” The master bedroom, for instance, is surprisingly, impressively small. More bulkhead than the baronial sprawl associated with luxury condominiums, it is efficient, with a freestanding piece serving as both storage and headboard. (Mind you, there’s also a view to the horizon of the Hudson River, plus, for some, perhaps a double-height terrace). The apartments are assumed to be, as with so many new luxury dwellings these days, pied-à-terres, and Selldorf addresses that reality in plan, putting her emphasis on the grand two-story living space,

allowing bedrooms to be utilitarian and the kitchen to disappear entirely behind folding walls.

Materials distinguish the bathroom, and here Selldorf admits succumbing to some “outlandish” indulgences. The freestanding tub is made of granite (“Everyone knows the Corian tub, so I wanted one in stone”); the walls are big slabs of lava ceramic—difficult to install, visually intriguing, beautifully tactile, and well worth the effort. Overall, materials—and especially the (sustainably sourced) teak used for the floors, kitchen counters, and stair risers—convey the message of a classic calm that will remain timely for as long as luxury means quality. And then there are those personal garages. **JULIE V. IOVINE**







COURTESY TSAO & MCKOWN ARCHITECTS

WILLIAM BEAVER HOUSE  
15 WILLIAM STREET  
TSAO & MCKOWN  
ARCHITECTS



Nix the dining room. Hide the kitchen. Expand the bathroom and add a tub that seats four. Now *that's* a pad. But is it luxury? Calvin Tsao of Tsao & McKown suggests that the definition of contemporary luxury responds to time and place. And the firm's design for the William Beaver House is luxury of a very distinct time and a very particular place. Conceived before the 2008 crash, the condo is a two-minute walk from Wall Street, and was originally intended for hedge-funders on the move.

Tsao says that the notion of

what makes a home in New York is as diverse as the city itself. "People are finally shedding some of the romantic notions of home," he said. "To me, in some ways, it's a lament. There's something wonderful about classic design, but we have to stay modern and real, more pragmatic. We investigate urban living instead of 'homes'." Tsao noted that for the William Beaver customer, the concealed kitchen is for reheating takeout, dining rooms are superfluous, and the bathroom is a place to relax. "We're talking about a youthful population that is not necessarily

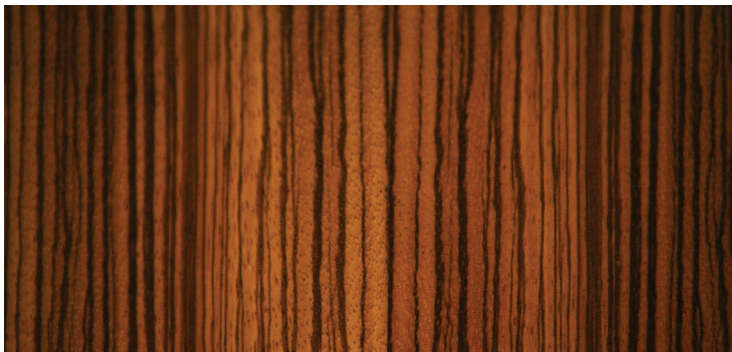
family-oriented," he said. "It's all very Holly Golightly, the oven is where you keep your sweaters."

While it may sound extravagant, Tsao believes the reality is that there's some serious value engineering and programmatic typologies at work: If a formal dining room isn't going to be used, then scrap it and give the space over to the bathroom. There, the notion of privacy is challenged with vertical louver doors that open onto the bedroom. "We're not visionaries; we did focus groups," the architect said. "People need time and a place to relax. By

opening onto the bedroom, we steal visual space. You don't need to be sequestered."

While load-bearing walls would have conserved costs, the designers engineered the building to allow for break-through walls, in case future owners want to expand into the next apartment. Burmese teak accents are used throughout in the flooring, on a kitchen butcher block, and lining the workstation hidden inside a closet. The workstation can be easily removed should the owner care to use it for clothing. "We insert moments that can be augmented,"

said Tsao. Elsewhere, elements of classic New York nudge their way in. The glazed yellow and charcoal brick of the facade is inspired by NYC taxicabs, while a wider version of subway tiles (4-inch-by-16-inch) line the bathroom. "I do believe the city exudes a certain kind of character, and it's important to reflect that," said Tsao. "Importing a Zen look with bamboo would be a little artificial." **TOM STOELKER**

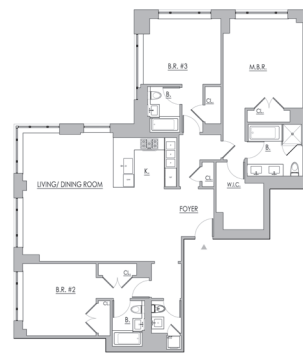
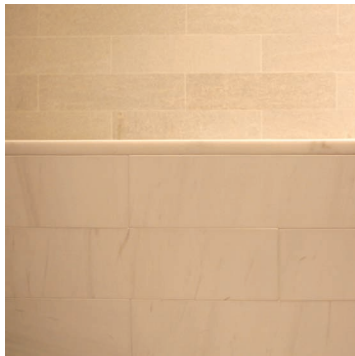
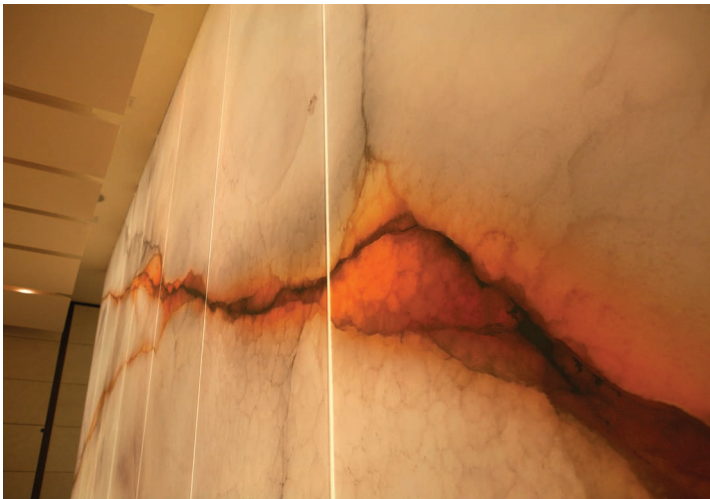


**Clockwise from top left:**  
The charcoal grey and taxi yellow tower; the peek-a-boo bathroom with louvers; CaesarStone kitchen backsplash; white lacquer kitchen cabinets; tiger wood in the lobby.





COURTESY KIKOSKI ARCHITECT



1280 FIFTH AVENUE  
ANDRE KIKOSKI  
ARCHITECT WITH SLCE  
ARCHITECTS AND ROBERT  
A.M. STERN ARCHITECTS

5-inch-wide white oak, except in the bathrooms where Jerusalem limestone floors surround Zuma soaking tubs. Bathroom finishes are meant to remind buyers that “this building is carefully designed for today’s lifestyles, but is also adjacent to a great repository of natural, organic beauty,” said Kikoski. Bianco Dolomiti marble counters top American black walnut vanities, and tiny abalone-shell wall tiles add texture to the walls of glass-enclosed showers.

The centerpiece of most units, kitchens with teak millwork and brown Labrador granite, are designed as fully integrated pieces of furniture with name-brand appliances hidden so as not to upstage the scenery. In the case of at least one north-facing studio, the kitchen, just steps from the bed, looks more like a custom-designed wardrobe than like a place to cook.

“Take any trophy building on Park Avenue,” said Kikoski. “The kitchen is sequestered away, it’s more for servants—it’s not anything you want to see or really ever go into. Here, the kitchen is at the center of the living experience.”

However stuffy, traditional designs were more forgiving to architects than new open-plan layouts and full-height windows. “The walls were thick, materials were hefty, and people didn’t have as much stuff,” said Kikoski. “Now, people want outrageously spacious bathrooms with huge walk-in closets and kitchens with tons of square footage. There’s a lot of careful precision and calibration required to capture these elements and to make them gracious within these incredibly engineered environments.”

Challenged with anticipating how residents will wish to use their space, and with leaving them as many options as possible, Kikoski presented building manager Brown Harris Stevens with ideas for horizontal and vertical unit combinations, should the right buyer come along. The building’s 116 apartments run between \$750,000 to over \$3.3 million, but combination units are listed at up to \$6.9 million, not including construction costs. “We thought of the great rooms as the equivalent of the Great Lawn,” said Kikoski. “You can use them however you want.” **JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ**



**Clockwise from top:** Rendering of typical living room; hammered metal on lobby concierge desk; the tower; photo mural of marble in the lobby; abalone-shell bathroom wall tiles.

The interiors of 1280 Fifth Avenue, a 19-story residential tower atop the Robert A.M. Stern–designed Museum for African Art, are more inspired by Central Park’s Harlem Meer than by Museum Mile. Working with architect of record SLCE, Kikoski portioned out the tower’s floor plans to preserve park views through large picture windows, taking care that interior elements don’t distract from them. The apartments are, in fact, organized looking outward. Renewable materials, wrought from a variety of finishes and scales, were chosen to evoke the park across the street. Permanent fixtures and finishes evoke the outdoors, too: Flooring is



RESOURCES



HL23

**ENGINEER:**  
**DeSimone Consulting Engineers,**  
[www.de-simone.com](http://www.de-simone.com)

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR:**  
**T.G. Nickel & Associates,** [www.tgnickel.com](http://www.tgnickel.com)

**FACADE CONSULTANTS:**  
**Front,** [www.frontinc.com](http://www.frontinc.com)

**ALUMINUM METAL CLADDING:**  
**Guilform,** [www.guilform.com](http://www.guilform.com)

**EAST CURTAIN WALL FACADE:**  
**Island International Exterior Fabricators**  
[www.islandcompanies.com](http://www.islandcompanies.com)  
**DAMTSA,** [www.damtsa.com](http://www.damtsa.com)

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**Nulux,** [www.nulux.com](http://www.nulux.com)

**CUSTOM PENTHOUSE GLASS  
DOORS/WALLS:**  
**Capoferri Serramenti,**  
[www.capoferri.it](http://www.capoferri.it)

**BATHROOM AND KITCHEN FIXTURES:**  
**Poliform,** [www.poliformusa.com](http://www.poliformusa.com)  
**Miele,** [www.mieleusa.com](http://www.mieleusa.com)  
**Vola,** [www.vola.com](http://www.vola.com)  
**Boffi,** [www.boffi.com](http://www.boffi.com)



200 ELEVENTH AVENUE

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:**  
**Gace Consulting Engineers,**  
[www.gace.net](http://www.gace.net)

**FACADE:**  
**Zahner,**  
[www.azahner.com](http://www.azahner.com)

**TERRACOTTA FABRICATOR:**  
**Boston Valley Terra Cotta,**  
[www.bostonvalleytc.com](http://www.bostonvalleytc.com)

**WINDOW FABRICATOR:**  
**Wausau Window  
and Wall Systems,**  
[www.wausauwindow.com](http://www.wausauwindow.com)

**BEDROOM CLOSET AND  
STORAGE HEADBOARD:**  
**Tissettana,**  
[www.tissettanta.com](http://www.tissettanta.com)

**KITCHEN APPLIANCES:**  
**Liebherr** (refrigerator),  
[www.liebherr.us](http://www.liebherr.us)  
**Miele** (dishwasher),  
[www.mieleusa.com](http://www.mieleusa.com)

**BATHROOM TILES:**  
**Ceramica Arnon,**  
[www.ceramicaarnon.com](http://www.ceramicaarnon.com)



WILLIAM BEAVER HOUSE

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:**  
**Desimone Consulting Engineers,**  
[www.de-simone.com](http://www.de-simone.com)

**GLAZED BRICK ON EXTERIOR:**  
**Belden Brick,**  
[www.beldenbrick.com](http://www.beldenbrick.com)

**ZEBRA WOOD IN LOBBY:**  
**Bacon Veneer Company,**  
[www.baconveneer.com](http://www.baconveneer.com)

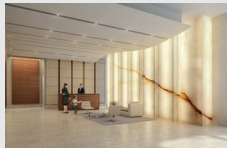
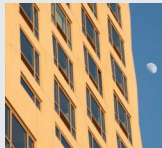
**TEAK FLOORS:**  
**V.A.L. Floors,**  
[www.valfloors.com](http://www.valfloors.com)

**KITCHEN MILLWORK:**  
**Miller Blaker,**  
[www.millerblaker.com](http://www.millerblaker.com)

**KITCHEN BACKSPLASH:**  
**CaesarStone,**  
[www.caesarstoneus.com](http://www.caesarstoneus.com)

**CERAMIC BATH TILES:**  
**Nemo Tile,**  
[www.nemotile.com](http://www.nemotile.com)

**LOUVER DOORS IN BATH:**  
**Component Assembly Systems,**  
[www.componentassembly.com](http://www.componentassembly.com)



1280 FIFTH AVENUE

**ARCHITECT OF RECORD, CORE AND SHELL:**  
**SLCE Architects,** [www.slsearch.com](http://www.slsearch.com)

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:**  
**Rosenwasser/Grossman Consulting Engineers,**  
[www.rosenwassergrossman.com](http://www.rosenwassergrossman.com)

**FACADE:**  
**Artex Systems,** 905-669-1425

**KITCHEN LIGHTING:**  
**jGoodDesign,** [www.jgooddesign.com](http://www.jgooddesign.com)

**KITCHEN AND BATH MILLWORK:**  
**Petersen Geller Spurge Millwork,**  
[www.pgsmillwork.com](http://www.pgsmillwork.com)

**KITCHEN APPLIANCES:**  
**Thermador** (refrigerator), [www.thermador.com](http://www.thermador.com)  
**Bosche** (dishwasher), [www.bosch-home.com/us](http://www.bosch-home.com/us)  
**Miele** (ventilator hood), [www.mieleusa.com](http://www.mieleusa.com)

**STONE AND TILE:**  
**Jantile, Inc.,** [www.jantile.com](http://www.jantile.com)

**BATHROOM TUB:**  
**Zuma Collection,** [www.zumacollection.com](http://www.zumacollection.com)

**BATHROOM FIXTURES:**  
**Kallista,** [www.kallista.com](http://www.kallista.com)

**LOBBY ARTWORK:**  
**Weil Studio,** [www.weilstudio.com](http://www.weilstudio.com)

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FEBRUARY

WEDNESDAY 2  
EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Luis Camnitzer:**  
**A Retrospective**  
El Museo del Barrio  
1230 5th Ave.  
www.elmuseo.org

**New York Fiber in the 21st Century**  
Lehman College Art Gallery  
250 Bedford Park Blvd. West  
Bronx, NY  
www.lehman.edu/gallery

**Plywood:**  
**Material, Process, Form**  
MOMA  
11 West 53rd St.  
www.moma.org

**FILM**  
**The City of Greater New York: The Story of Consolidation**  
**Screening and Q&A**  
7:00 p.m.  
Recreation Center 54  
348 East 54th St.

**LECTURES**  
**Albert Watson:**  
**Photographers Lecture Series**  
7:00 p.m.  
School at ICP  
1114 Ave. of the Americas  
www.icp.org

**Emerging Design in China**  
8:00 p.m.  
The New School  
Theresa Lang Community & Student Center  
55 West 13th St.  
www.newschool.edu

**Andrew S. Dolkart:**  
**The Row House Reborn**  
6:30 p.m.  
Charles Sumner School  
Museum & Archives  
1201 17th St. NW  
Washington, DC  
www.latrobechaptersah.org

**SYMPOSIUM**  
**Fit Nation DC: Promoting Healthy Communities Through Design**  
8:00 a.m.  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C.

**THURSDAY 3**  
**SYMPOSIUM**  
**The Case For Evidence-Based Design**  
12:00 p.m.  
Center for Architecture  
1218 Arch St.  
Philadelphia, PA  
www.aiaphiladelphia.org

**LECTURES**  
**Henry James—**  
**A Child of the Village**  
6:30 p.m.  
Church of the Ascension  
12 West 11th St.  
www.gvshp.org

**Hascoe Lecture Series:**  
**20th-Century Photography**  
7:30 p.m.  
Bruce Museum  
1 Museum Drive  
Greenwich, CT  
www.brucemuseum.org

**ADHT Pathways Lecture Series:** Erika Naginski  
6:00 p.m.  
The New School  
Alvin Johnson/  
J. M. Kaplan Hall  
66 West 12th St.  
www.newschool.edu

**Michael Graves:**  
**Artist's Talk**  
**Landscapes and Still Lives**  
7 p.m.  
Rider University Art Gallery  
2083 Lawrenceville Rd.  
Lawrenceville, NJ  
www.rider.edu

**New Practices 2010 Winner**  
**Presentation:**  
**SOFTlab**  
6:00 p.m.  
The Center for Architecture  
536 LaGuardia Pl.  
www.aiany.org

**EVENTS**  
**AIA 2010 Grassroots Leadership and Legislative Conference**  
Grand Hyatt Washington  
Washington, D.C.  
www.aia.org

**10th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference**  
Westin Charlotte Hotel  
Charlotte, NC  
www.newpartners.org

**FRIDAY 4**  
**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**  
**The Manifestation of Milieu**  
Agora Gallery  
530 West 25th St.  
www.agora-gallery.com

**Cartoon Polymaths**  
Sheila C. Johnson  
Design Center  
Parsons The New School for Design  
66 5th Ave.  
www.newschool.edu

**EVENT**  
**Architectural League First Friday: Arup**  
6:30 p.m.  
Arup Offices  
155 Ave. of the Americas  
www.archleague.org

**LECTURE**  
**World Heritage Sites, Global Climate Change, and Social Conflict**  
5:30 p.m.  
Pratt Manhattan  
144 West 14th St.

**SATURDAY 5**  
**SYMPOSIUM**  
**Fitch Forum**  
8:30 a.m.  
Wood Auditorium,  
Avery Hall  
Columbia University  
2960 Broadway  
www.fitchforum.com

**SUN 6**  
**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Stargazers:**  
**Elizabeth Cartlett**  
Bronx Museum of the Arts  
1040 Grand Concourse  
Bronx, NY  
www.bronxmuseum.org

**FILM**  
**Hollywood Modern: Film Design of the 1930s Film Series**  
12:45 p.m.  
National Building Museum  
401 F St. NW  
Washington, D.C.  
www.nbm.org

**MONDAY 7**  
**LECTURE**  
**Kenneth Jackson and Lisa Keller:**  
**The Encyclopedia of New York City**  
6:30 p.m.  
Skyscraper Museum  
39 Battery Pl.  
www.skyscraper.org

**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Kevin Roche:**  
**Architecture as Environment**  
Yale School of Architecture  
Gallery of Paul Rudolph Hall  
New Haven, CT  
www.architecture.yale.edu

**FILM**  
**Philadelphia:**  
**The Great Experiment**  
6:00 p.m.  
Center for Architecture  
1218 Arch St.  
Philadelphia, PA  
www.aiaphiladelphia.org

**WEDNESDAY 9**  
**LECTURES**  
**David Freedberg:**  
**The Materiality of the Brain and the Material of Culture**  
7:30 p.m.  
Bard Graduate Center  
38 West 86th St.  
www.bgc.bard.edu

**Helen and Newton Harrison**  
**Eco-Art:**  
**College Art Association Keynote lecture**  
5:30 p.m.  
Hilton New York  
1335 Ave. of the Americas  
www.collegeart.org

**Stephanie Sinclair:**  
**Photographers Lecture Series**  
7:00 p.m.  
School at ICP  
1114 Ave. of the Americas  
www.icp.org

**Taking, Leaving, Moving: Mobility, Evocative Objects and a Sense of Home**  
7:00 p.m.  
BRIC Rotunda Gallery  
33 Clinton St.  
Brooklyn, NY  
www.bricartsmedia.org

**SYMPOSIUM**  
**Better Buildings by Design | 2011**  
Sheraton Conference Center  
Burlington, VT  
www.aiavt.org

**THURSDAY 10**  
**EVENT**  
**Tours for Tots: Squiggles and Lines**  
RISD Museum  
224 Benefit St.  
Providence, RI  
www.risdmuseum.org

**LECTURES**  
**Envelope Conversations:**  
**Richard Sennett, Eyal Weizman, Teddy Cruz, Gerlad Frug**  
6:00 p.m.  
Princeton University  
Betts Auditorium,  
Architecture Building  
Princeton, NJ  
www.soa.princeton.edu

**Thomas Jayne:**  
**The Architecture of the Finest Rooms**  
6:30 p.m.  
Library at the General Society  
20 West 44th St.  
www.classicist.org

**Thomas de Monchaux:**  
**Seven Architectural Embarrassments**  
6:30 p.m.  
Yale School of Architecture,  
Hastings Hall  
180 York St.  
New Haven, CT  
www.architecture.yale.edu

**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Jugaad Urbanism: Resourceful Strategies for Indian Cities**  
AIANY Center for Architecure  
536 LaGuardia Pl.  
www.aiany.org

**FILM**  
**45th Annual Ann Arbor Film Festival**  
5:00 p.m.  
Institute of Contemporary Art  
100 Northern Avenue  
Boston, MA  
www.icaboston.org

**SUNDAY 13**  
**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Picasso:**  
**Guitars 1912–1914**  
MOMA  
11 West 53rd St.  
www.moma.org

**LECTURE**  
**Street photographer Mark Cohen**  
3:00 p.m.  
The Philadelphia Museum of Art  
Philadelphia, PA  
www.philamuseum.org

**MONDAY 14**  
**LECTURES**  
**Artists on Artists: Abraham Cruzvillegas on Robert Smithson**  
6:30 p.m.  
Dia Chelsea  
535 West 22nd St.  
www.diacenter.org

**Smart Growth: Seven Rules for Sustainable Communities**  
12:30 p.m.  
National Building Museum  
401 F St. NW  
Washington, D.C.  
www.nbm.org

**TUESDAY 15**  
**LECTURE**  
**The Urban is Everywhere Always**  
6:30 p.m.  
Piper Auditorium  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, MA  
www.gsd.harvard.edu



KEVIN KENNEDY

**AN EXCHANGE WITH SOL LEWITT: CABINET**  
300 Nevins Street, Brooklyn, NY  
Through March 5

**MASS MOCA**  
1040 MASS MoCA Way  
North Adams, MA  
Through March 31

Sol LeWitt considered art exchange an integral part of his creative process. The Conceptualist-Minimalist artist also hoped to subvert the traditional business model of the art world by creating a thriving gifting economy of artworks. It is notable that LeWitt didn't trade works only with other art-world luminaries; he would trade with anyone who sent him something of interest. Independent curator Regine Basha put out a call for images, objects, music, film, books, and creations conceived in the spirit of LeWitt, and was stunned when over 100,000 submissions poured in: Lego sculptures, photographs, and drawings, including work from some noted artists like Luis Camnitzer, Teresita Fernandez, and Jaime Permeth. The piece *Untitled (Question with no answer)* is above. Exhibited in two locations simultaneously, the Mass MoCA portion of the show is a companion to the LeWitt Wall Drawing Retrospective, currently on view.



COURTESY MOMA

**PLYWOOD: MATERIAL, PROCESS, FORM**  
The Museum of Modern Art  
11 West 53 Street, New York  
Opens February 2

What material will you find in playground equipment, furniture, flooring, and wind turbine blades? Plywood. Despite its extensive use in the worlds of architecture, art and design, this manufactured wood is often overlooked. The Museum of Modern Art's new show *Plywood: Material, Process, Form* features examples from the 1930s through the 1950s that examine how plywood's aesthetic and formal values influenced 20th-century design. Pulled from MoMA's vast archives, the diverse objects on display include iconic furniture like the lounge chair by Charles and Ray Eames, above, and designs by architects Alvar Aalto, Eero Saarinen, and Arne Jacobsen, as well as organic platters by Tapio Wirkkala, a Butterfly Stool by Sori Yanagi, an architectural model for a prefab house by Marcel Breuer, and experimental plywood designs of the aeronautics industry. In addition to telling the story of this material through objects, archival photographs document its design and manufacture.



FEBRUARY

WEDNESDAY 2  
EXHIBITION OPENINGS

**Luis Camnitzer:**  
**A Retrospective**  
El Museo del Barrio  
1230 5th Ave.  
www.elmuseo.org

**New York Fiber in the 21st Century**  
Lehman College Art Gallery  
250 Bedford Park Blvd. West  
Bronx, NY  
www.lehman.edu/gallery

**Plywood:**  
**Material, Process, Form**  
MOMA  
11 West 53rd St.  
www.moma.org

**FILM**  
**The City of Greater New York: The Story of Consolidation**  
**Screening and Q&A**  
7:00 p.m.  
Recreation Center 54  
348 East 54th St.

**LECTURES**  
**Albert Watson:**  
**Photographers Lecture Series**  
7:00 p.m.  
School at ICP  
1114 Ave. of the Americas  
www.icp.org

**Emerging Design in China**  
8:00 p.m.  
The New School  
Theresa Lang Community & Student Center  
55 West 13th St.  
www.newschool.edu

**Andrew S. Dolkart:**  
**The Row House Reborn**  
6:30 p.m.  
Charles Sumner School  
Museum & Archives  
1201 17th St. NW  
Washington, DC  
www.latrobechaptersah.org

**SYMPOSIUM**  
**Fit Nation DC: Promoting Healthy Communities Through Design**  
8:00 a.m.  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C.

**THURSDAY 3**  
**SYMPOSIUM**  
**The Case For Evidence-Based Design**  
12:00 p.m.  
Center for Architecture  
1218 Arch St.  
Philadelphia, PA  
www.aiaphiladelphia.org

**LECTURES**  
**Henry James—**  
**A Child of the Village**  
6:30 p.m.  
Church of the Ascension  
12 West 11th St.  
www.gvshp.org

**Hascoe Lecture Series:**  
**20th-Century Photography**  
7:30 p.m.  
Bruce Museum  
1 Museum Drive  
Greenwich, CT  
www.brucemuseum.org

**ADHT Pathways Lecture Series:** Erika Naginski  
6:00 p.m.  
The New School  
Alvin Johnson/  
J. M. Kaplan Hall  
66 West 12th St.  
www.newschool.edu

**Michael Graves:**  
**Artist's Talk**  
**Landscapes and Still Lives**  
7 p.m.  
Rider University Art Gallery  
2083 Lawrenceville Rd.  
Lawrenceville, NJ  
www.rider.edu

**New Practices 2010 Winner Presentation:**  
**SOFTlab**  
6:00 p.m.  
The Center for Architecture  
536 LaGuardia Pl.  
www.aiany.org

**EVENTS**  
**AIA 2010 Grassroots Leadership and Legislative Conference**  
Grand Hyatt Washington  
Washington, D.C.  
www.aia.org

**10th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference**  
Westin Charlotte Hotel  
Charlotte, NC  
www.newpartners.org

**FRIDAY 4**  
**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**  
**The Manifestation of Milieu**  
Agora Gallery  
530 West 25th St.  
www.agora-gallery.com

**Cartoon Polymaths**  
Sheila C. Johnson  
Design Center  
Parsons The New School for Design  
66 5th Ave.  
www.newschool.edu

**EVENT**  
**Architectural League First Friday: Arup**  
6:30 p.m.  
Arup Offices  
155 Ave. of the Americas  
www.archleague.org

**LECTURE**  
**World Heritage Sites, Global Climate Change, and Social Conflict**  
5:30 p.m.  
Pratt Manhattan  
144 West 14th St.

**SATURDAY 5**  
**SYMPOSIUM**  
**Fitch Forum**  
8:30 a.m.  
Wood Auditorium,  
Avery Hall  
Columbia University  
2960 Broadway  
www.fitchforum.com

**SUN 6**  
**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Stargazers:**  
**Elizabeth Cartlett**  
Bronx Museum of the Arts  
1040 Grand Concourse  
Bronx, NY  
www.bronxmuseum.org

**FILM**  
**Hollywood Modern: Film Design of the 1930s Film Series**  
12:45 p.m.  
National Building Museum  
401 F St. NW  
Washington, D.C.  
www.nbm.org

**MONDAY 7**  
**LECTURE**  
**Kenneth Jackson and Lisa Keller:**  
**The Encyclopedia of New York City**  
6:30 p.m.  
Skyscraper Museum  
39 Battery Pl.  
www.skyscraper.org

**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Kevin Roche:**  
**Architecture as Environment**  
Yale School of Architecture  
Gallery of Paul Rudolph Hall  
New Haven, CT  
www.architecture.yale.edu

**FILM**  
**Philadelphia:**  
**The Great Experiment**  
6:00 p.m.  
Center for Architecture  
1218 Arch St.  
Philadelphia, PA  
www.aiaphiladelphia.org

**WEDNESDAY 9**  
**LECTURES**  
**David Freedberg:**  
**The Materiality of the Brain and the Material of Culture**  
7:30 p.m.  
Bard Graduate Center  
38 West 86th St.  
www.bgc.bard.edu

**Helen and Newton Harrison**  
**Eco-Art:**  
**College Art Association Keynote lecture**  
5:30 p.m.  
Hilton New York  
1335 Ave. of the Americas  
www.collegeart.org

**Stephanie Sinclair:**  
**Photographers Lecture Series**  
7:00 p.m.  
School at ICP  
1114 Ave. of the Americas  
www.icp.org

**Taking, Leaving, Moving: Mobility, Evocative Objects and a Sense of Home**  
7:00 p.m.  
BRIC Rotunda Gallery  
33 Clinton St.  
Brooklyn, NY  
www.bricartsmedia.org

**SYMPOSIUM**  
**Better Buildings by Design | 2011**  
Sheraton Conference Center  
Burlington, VT  
www.aiavt.org

**THURSDAY 10**  
**EVENT**  
**Tours for Tots: Squiggles and Lines**  
RISD Museum  
224 Benefit St.  
Providence, RI  
www.risdmuseum.org

**LECTURES**  
**Envelope Conversations:**  
**Richard Sennett, Eyal Weizman, Teddy Cruz, Gerlad Frug**  
6:00 p.m.  
Princeton University  
Betts Auditorium,  
Architecture Building  
Princeton, NJ  
www.soa.princeton.edu

**Thomas Jayne:**  
**The Architecture of the Finest Rooms**  
6:30 p.m.  
Library at the General Society  
20 West 44th St.  
www.classicist.org

**Thomas de Monchaux:**  
**Seven Architectural Embarrassments**  
6:30 p.m.  
Yale School of Architecture,  
Hastings Hall  
180 York St.  
New Haven, CT  
www.architecture.yale.edu

**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Jugaad Urbanism: Resourceful Strategies for Indian Cities**  
AIANY Center for Architecure  
536 LaGuardia Pl.  
www.aiany.org

**FILM**  
**45th Annual Ann Arbor Film Festival**  
5:00 p.m.  
Institute of Contemporary Art  
100 Northern Avenue  
Boston, MA  
www.icaboston.org

**SUNDAY 13**  
**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Picasso:**  
**Guitars 1912–1914**  
MOMA  
11 West 53rd St.  
www.moma.org

**LECTURE**  
**Street photographer Mark Cohen**  
3:00 p.m.  
The Philadelphia Museum of Art  
Philadelphia, PA  
www.philamuseum.org

**MONDAY 14**  
**LECTURES**  
**Artists on Artists: Abraham Cruzvillegas on Robert Smithson**  
6:30 p.m.  
Dia Chelsea  
535 West 22nd St.  
www.diacenter.org

**Smart Growth: Seven Rules for Sustainable Communities**  
12:30 p.m.  
National Building Museum  
401 F St. NW  
Washington, D.C.  
www.nbm.org

**TUESDAY 15**  
**LECTURE**  
**The Urban is Everywhere Always**  
6:30 p.m.  
Piper Auditorium  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, MA  
www.gsd.harvard.edu



KEVIN KENNEDICK

**AN EXCHANGE WITH SOL LEWITT**  
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Through March 5

**MASS MOCA**  
1040 MASS MoCA Way  
North Adams, MA  
Through March 31

Sol LeWitt considered art exchange an integral part of his creative process. The Conceptualist-Minimalist artist also hoped to subvert the traditional business model of the art world by creating a thriving gifting economy of artworks. It is notable that LeWitt didn't trade works only with other art-world luminaries; he would trade with anyone who sent him something of interest. Independent curator Regine Basha put out a call for images, objects, music, film, books, and creations conceived in the spirit of LeWitt, and was stunned when over 100,000 submissions poured in: Lego sculptures, photographs, and drawings, including work from some noted artists like Luis Camnitzer, Teresita Fernandez, and Jaime Permeth. The piece *Untitled (Question with no answer)* is above. Exhibited in two locations simultaneously, the Mass MoCA portion of the show is a companion to the LeWitt Wall Drawing Retrospective, currently on view.



COURTESY MOMA

**PLYWOOD: MATERIAL, PROCESS, FORM**  
The Museum of Modern Art  
11 West 53 Street, New York  
Opens February 2

What material will you find in playground equipment, furniture, flooring, and wind turbine blades? Plywood. Despite its extensive use in the worlds of architecture, art and design, this manufactured wood is often overlooked. The Museum of Modern Art's new show *Plywood: Material, Process, Form* features examples from the 1930s through the 1950s that examine how plywood's aesthetic and formal values influenced 20th-century design. Pulled from MoMA's vast archives, the diverse objects on display include iconic furniture like the lounge chair by Charles and Ray Eames, above, and designs by architects Alvar Aalto, Eero Saarinen, and Arne Jacobsen, as well as organic platters by Tapio Wirkkala, a Butterfly Stool by Sori Yanagi, an architectural model for a prefab house by Marcel Breuer, and experimental plywood designs of the aeronautics industry. In addition to telling the story of this material through objects, archival photographs document its design and manufacture.





**A stack of balconies used for dispatching goods in Hong Kong.**

worse, is everywhere we look. We live, breathe, and work in a world of mass-produced commodities that we pick and choose from to shape our own aesthetic. The modern factory and its operations are the lynchpin of this system, and the improvements in its form and structure were many and dizzying over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. *The Vertical Urban Factory*, a compact but impressive exhibition at the Skyscraper Museum in New York, examines the subject of the factory in detail and makes a case for the relevance and reinstatement of the building type today.

Guest curator Nina Rappaport has worked with a skilled team, including Studio Tractor Architects, MGMT Design, and filmmaker Eric Breitbart, to develop an exhibition that is small in terms of footprint but rewardingly dense with content. The show is an outgrowth of a graduate studio taught by Rappaport and architect Mike Tower at Parsons in the School of Constructed Environments in Fall 2006. The curatorial vantage point is grounded in Sigfried Giedion's *Mechanization Takes Command* and Reyner Banham's *A Concrete Atlantis*, two pioneering books with regard to architecture's relationship to industry, and the exhibition itself reflects the tone of those volumes—a rather delighted relaying of unexpected discoveries. The factory, from Ruskin's "satanic mill" to Volkswagen's pristine car assembly plant in Dresden, is so decidedly interwoven with the history of modern architecture as to be inseparable. It is the interaction of engineering and architecture, however, that *The Vertical Urban Factory* explores.

The moving assembly line and the massive machine that houses it, the modern factory, became the unique American contribution that jumpstarted the modern era of mass consumption. The exhibition introduces key figures in this history like Oliver Evans, who in the late

1700s designed a fully-automated flour mill driven by water and gravity (a design that stands as the thesis statement of the American preoccupation with flow production); Frederick Winslow Taylor, the efficiency expert famous for his time and motion studies; and Lillian and Frank Gilbreth, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century industrial engineers who refined Taylor's initial investigations with an emphasis on psychology and worker satisfaction. Rappaport has also commemorated the mostly unsung engineers who made obsessions with speed, accuracy, and interchangeability into a working reality. One display case features the wooden implements of tool and die makers that were at the core of this effort, and archival footage throughout the exhibition demonstrates this idea of flow, with the final film juxtaposing images from the era of these modern factories with contemporary clips: Here is the literal image of flow, whether it be fabrics, automobiles, or milk products. It is a potent reminder that the ideal factory is never static.

The show is introduced by an extensive timeline—color-coded to emphasize key events in technology (harvest gold), evolving factory types (blue), and social issues (green)—that covers one wall. The exhibit unfolds in three sections under the headings "Modern," "Contemporary," and finally "New York City," each section moving from the general to specific case studies that represent the evolving vertical urban factory.

The entry points to this history are of course spinning, weaving, milling, and their mechanization into an automated process demanding a new type of construction. Thus the exhibition on one level is an examination of the factory as an evolving architectural type taken from its origins to the present day. But it is far more than that, as it brings together the threads of technology, workflow, efficiency, manufacturing, factory architecture and the relevant social issues in a fact-rich but coherent manner that will appeal to

a broad audience. The social issues surrounding the provision of adequate light, air, and hygiene for workers and the integration of the factory into the urban fabric were as much of a concern then as now. These initial, modern factories are organized at the periphery of the main exhibition space, while the displays of contemporary and proposed factories are shown on repurposed conveyor rollers at the center of the space (the original equipment was manufactured by the same company that equipped Highland Park). What emerges is that the modern factory is unsustainable because of its high-energy costs, impact on the environment, and the 1960s and 1970s saw a crisis develop that continues today. Finally, there is the contemporary factory as spectacle, such as the aforementioned Volkswagen assembly plant. But it is really the proposed reintegration of the vertical urban factory into its point of origin that is the point of the show.

In New York, these structures were influenced by the 1916 Zoning Law just as surely as the skyscraper was; manufacturing began to be isolated in neighborhoods largely along the waterfront thereafter. Until 1960, New York was still a manufacturing hub. Sadly, from the standpoint of the manufacturers themselves, the horizontal, shed-like factory has proven to be the cheapest solution to *their* problems, but not to the communities surrounding them. Unimaginably vast complexes in China housing hundreds of thousands of workers are today's reality, and the Vertical Urban Factory proposes a vision of something smaller, local, and linked to the community rather than imposed upon it.

Almost every factory case study incorporates a commissioned model, well-researched with atypical photographs, archival footage, and artifacts that add a human-scale element. Some examples are very well known (the Fiat factory at Lingotto with its rooftop test track), while others are fairly obscure (Buckminster Fuller's Vertical

## Industry Grows Up

**Vertical Urban Factory**  
Skyscraper Museum  
39 Battery Place, New York  
Through June 2011

While 1913 might be thought of as the last year of peace before the guns of August, 1914, in fact, one event of that year was to impact the following decades as profoundly as the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand: Henry Ford's perfection of the moving assembly line. The Model T debuted in 1908, but it took

Ford and his team at Highland Park five years to achieve continuous flow production, a manufacturing ambition that can be traced back at least to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. To consider the design of Albert Kahn's Ford Factory in isolation as a monument of that achievement is to miss the point: The achievement, for better or

## LIFE DRAWING

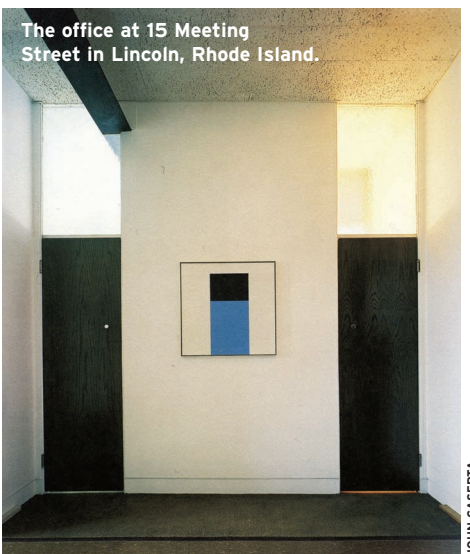
*Ira Rakatansky: As Modern As Tomorrow*  
Lynnetter Widder, John Caserta,  
Joan Ockman  
William Stout, \$40.00

At a time when architecture PhD programs and students are increasing in number, *Ira Rakatansky: As Modern As Tomorrow* provides a timely reminder of the value of architectural scholarship, and importantly, a compelling methodology for carrying out that kind of work. Lynnetter Widder, an architect and the head of the architecture department at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), edited the book, along with information designer John Caserta. She

engages in an articulate and thoughtful brand of research. Simply put, her scholarship itself is architectural. In the book, which presents Rakatansky's selected works along with a three-part essay by Widder, she performs close readings of architectural drawing. At the book's outset, she acknowledges, "the transposition of architecture from idea to realization is subject to a much larger degree of uncertainty than most of us would like to think." Builders build. Architects draw. So rather than rely on biography, cultural criticism, or architectural theory, Widder keeps her analytical gaze trained squarely on Rakatansky's drawing. What she discovers is the story of the son of a Rhode Island contractor who trained at Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD) in the 1940s under leading architects and German émigrés Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer. She also

finds an architect completely focused on the craft and detail of his work, as well as a poet attuned to what it means for architecture to be on the one hand American, on the other modern, and—always—both simultaneously.

Even as Rakatansky came into contact with different teachers and influences, and engaged in broad cultural questions, his drawings, Widder argues, always have one reader in mind: the team of contractors who will do the work to realize the design. She suggests that Rakatansky arrived at the GSD as someone "used to moving quickly and expediently from conception to construction." To support this, she turns to work produced for Breuer's studio course, comparing Rakatansky's drawings to the drawings of two fellow students. One student misdirected the details, choosing to highlight the secondary feature of a lock on the **continued on page 19**



**The office at 15 Meeting Street in Lincoln, Rhode Island.**





A Madrid recycling plant by Abalos & Herreros Architects.

LUIS ASIN

Cotton Mill, created with the design students of North Carolina State University in 1952). But there is a balanced amount of information given to each, and it is here that the research behind this exhibition shows. [\*]

The Vertical Urban Factory is not a universal solution; it would most strongly appeal to cities with vacant factories begging for reuse (NYC, Baltimore, Chicago). Such skilled and semi-skilled manufacturing jobs as provided in such factories have traditionally provided the leg up for the first generation of immigrants in these communities. This exhibition calls for this re-vision of the factory as being fully integrated with its community, while the Vertical Urban Factory itself is conceived of as self-sufficient to

the degree possible in terms of generation of power, recycling, linkage to transportation networks, etc. The final wall is devoted to a historical examination of manufacturing in New York, and reminds us once again that this exhibition examines almost a century of material. This exhibition will be of interest to architects, historians, sociologists, and just about anyone involved in the future of cities; attendance should be required on the part of the New York City Council. It is also a testament to how potentially dull two-dimensional material can be enlivened with smart curatorial choices.

**RUSSELL FLINCHUM IS A DESIGN HISTORIAN LIVING IN MANHATTAN AND AUTHOR OF *AMERICAN DESIGN* (MOMA/5 CONTINENTS, 2008).**

**LIFE DRAWING** continued from page 18 bottom of an entrance door while leaving the main architectural challenge unresolved. The other student produced a complete set of working drawings “that could easily have been part of a bid set generated by a well-run architectural office.” However, Rakatansky’s subtle approach is at once detailed and expeditious. He intuitively understands the translation from drawing to building, knowing exactly which moments warrant detail and which materials to specify. Widder calls this effect “construction transparency,” referring to the easy fluidity with which Rakatansky’s ideas can be realized into building.

The biography is limited to that which directly informs his approach to architecture. His father, for example, was a contractor, and the young Rakatansky grew up involved with house construction in different capacities. In the drawings, Widder locates the influences that shaped Rakatansky’s development as an architect, beginning with his early exposure to house building, and moving through his experience as a student of Gropius and Breuer at the GSD. At the time, the school was in the midst of transition, and Rakatansky was an employee of Breuer, and, just as importantly, a resident of Providence.

Widder is particularly adept at parsing currents that might otherwise be considered homogeneous. In 2008, she organized *Return Emigrations*, a conference at Columbia University,

whose research—and subtitle, “Architectural Cross-Currents in Postwar Germany and America,”—posits a mercurial modernism, a period of architecture that evolved and moved and splintered in response to the mobility forced by political and economic realities. With this new book project, she performs a similar operation, applying it not to an intercontinental historical period, but instead, to a single professional working in Providence, Rhode Island. In the work of this single architect, she discovers a dynamic language not reducible to any single ideology.

This approach is undergirded by Joan Ockman’s lucid introduction. There, Ockman provides an impressively researched presentation of Rakatansky’s educational and professional background. She presents the GSD not as a stable monolith in the way that it is often treated. Instead, she takes a more nuanced approach, revealing the transitions the school was undergoing while he was a student there. Entering in 1943, Rakatansky’s peers came from a different social pool than they had in previous decades, since World War II was causing a demographic upheaval; he was part of a different kind of GSD. There was also the issue of pedagogical changes. Joseph Hudnut, then the GSD dean, objected to Gropius’s “professionalized formalism.” These internecine debates, too, are later revealed in Rakatansky’s drawings.

The book includes a trove of archival drawings—plans, sections,

details—ranging from early student work to later professional documents. From start to finish, they reveal an author with an intuitive sense of craft. Historical and contemporary photographs soften the presentation and show the enduring quality of Rakatansky’s architecture. A can of Campbell’s beef consommé in the pantry and family photographs fixed to the fridge with magnets underscore that Rakatansky did not consider the contractor to be the final audience for his work. He was, as Widder points out, always empathetic to the client.

Unlike his near-contemporaries Philip Johnson and I.M. Pei, Rakatansky went from Harvard back to his hometown, remaining relatively obscure outside Rhode Island. “There is no ‘school of Rakatansky,’” the authors point out. In her analysis, though, Widder discovers a broader message. Though her subject is rooted in a particular place at a specific time—this is, after all, one of the book’s main arguments—her analysis can be readily (and constructively) applied to contemporary practice, since it addresses challenges facing architects today: the changing relationship between drawing and building and the increasingly complex immigrations, emigrations, and mobilities that contribute to current architectural thought, making the work truly “as modern as tomorrow.”

**NEW YORK-BASED CRITIC JOHN GENDALL TEACHES AT PARSONS AND PRATT.**

## MINING A MILIEU

*Triumvirate: McKim, Mead & White: Art, Architecture, Scandal, and Class in America’s Gilded Age*  
Mosette Broderick  
Knopf  
\$40.00

A great biographer of an important cultural producer accomplishes two things: First, he or she explains for the reader the subject’s motivations and shows how that person was able to climb to the heights of his or her field; second, the author provides the reader with the feeling that you are there at the making of a work or works of great importance.

In her new firm biography, *Triumvirate: McKim, Mead and White: Art, Architecture, Scandal and Class in America’s Gilded Age*, Mosette Broderick, an art historian at New York University, accomplishes just such feats. The book’s subtitle piles up the themes to be addressed in this monumental study, and indeed, they are all considered in a comprehensive account of what the

author justifiably styles “America’s greatest designers from the death of Richardson to World War I.”

It has been more than a quarter century since two books on McKim, Mead & White appeared in 1983, one by Leland Roth and another by Richard Guy Wilson. Those pioneering studies were followed by Paul Baker’s biography *Stanny: The Gilded Life of Stanford White* (1989), and by a spate of more popular accounts of White’s liaison with the chorus girl Evelyn Nesbit, whose husband Harry K. Thaw murdered White. In addition, White’s great-grandson, Samuel G. White, has published beautifully-illustrated books with Rizzoli that capture the visual richness of the firm’s work, and art historian Wayne Craven has written *Stanford White: Decorator in Opulence and Dealer in Antiquities* (2005), which considers the architect’s talents with interiors as well as his extensive practice as an antiquities dealer. The acceleration of publishing on McKim, Mead & White has corresponded to the emergence of architectural post-modernism that made the firm’s historicism critically palatable after the ascendancy and entrenchment of modernism had made it anathema, and also to the expansion of architectural history’s purview

beyond its original concerns to include decorating, landscape, and other related fields.

The earlier, sometimes more pious accounts provide in some cases more thoroughgoing formal analyses of the buildings than does this new biography, and certainly more extensive illustrations, but Broderick has truly accomplished what she sets out to do, namely, provide “a study of the path of the architects.” That may sound like a prosaic undertaking, but it isn’t. For one thing, such an effort requires the biographer to get inside her subjects’ head, to understand what led them to make certain career moves and what formal attitudes inspired the look of the work. For another thing, it requires the author to reconstruct the world around the subject in great specificity. Both of these things Broderick has done in astonishing detail, while acknowledging that the historical record for two of the partners—McKim and White—is much richer than for Mead, who left little in the way of either a personal or professional record and who, consequently, is less well understood than his peers. Indeed, this is the kind of book that can only be written over the course of years—even decades—by an author who

hasn’t merely *studied* the material, but *lived* it. Thus Broderick is able to reconstruct the labyrinth of social relations between the architects, their artist collaborators, and patrons. Moreover, as a New Yorker, she can plot all of their actions in the city itself, recreating its appearance at the turn of the century and helping the reader see how the surviving works of the architects fit into their historical contexts. Broderick immerses us in the social set that McKim, Mead, and White navigated in becoming major American tastemakers.

In so doing, she fleshes out the identities of the three partners: White, the socialite charmer whose high living finally does him in; McKim, who finds solace from personal tragedy by fashioning himself the dean of American architecture in his later years; and Mead, the shadowy but level-headed manager of the firm, who held his partners in check. None of the three emerges as anything less than fascinating dinner company, if deeply flawed humans. Clearly, they could not have survived without their assistants, especially Joseph Wells, who comes across as perhaps the firm’s most talented designer and whose embrace of historical architecture shaped the direction the

The pleasure palace at Madison Square Garden, 1887-91.



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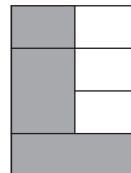
firm would take. His death in 1890, Broderick suggests, ended its most creative period of production. Without belaboring the point, Broderick shows that the works of McKim, Mead, & White were not the products of three men, or even of their vast office that helped establish a new form of architectural practice, but of an entire social *milieu*—at once high-minded and scandalous.

**KEVIN D. MURPHY IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY AT CUNY GRADUATE CENTER.**



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PHOTO: ROY WRIGHT

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# STEEL AND SHADE

## THE ARCHITECTURE OF DONALD WEXLER

January 29 - May 29, 2011

Donald Wexler, *Steel House*, 1962, photography © Juergen Nogai, 2010

Organized by the Palm Springs Art Museum and California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, this exhibition is funded in part by the museum's Architecture & Design Council, CALCRAFT Construction, Mitre & Bevel, Escalante Architects, Helene Galen, Daniel Patrick Giles, Hamptons Modern, Thomas Jakway and Stephen Tripp, Harold Matzner, Brian McGuire, Ph.D., the City of Palm Springs, Modernism Week, Weldon Color Lab, American Institute of Architects/California Desert Chapter, and Friends of Donald Wexler.

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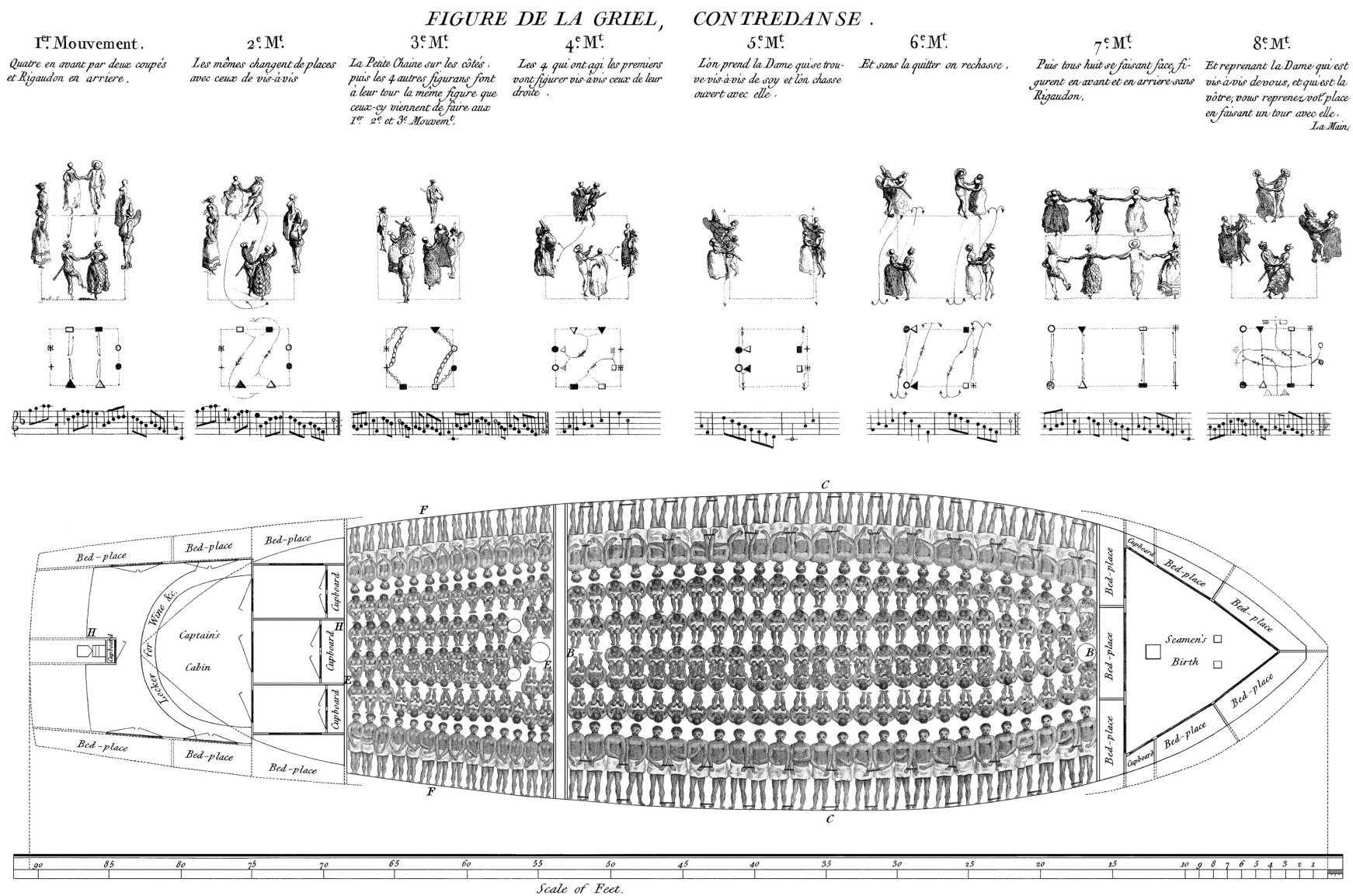
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## EYES WITH A MIND OF THEIR OWN

Among architects, and just about anyone else with a visual sensibility, Edward Tufte is a legendary figure thanks in part to his self-published books, particularly *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* (1983), *Envisioning Information* (1990), *Visual Explanations* (1997), and *Beautiful Evidence* (2006), books studded with eye- and mind-opening graphics and discussions about what Tufte calls “forever knowledge.”

The political scientist, statistician, and retired Yale professor is also a sculptor, and he recently opened a gallery in Chelsea, ET Modern, to show his work with a plan in mind to someday expand the gallery to a Storm King-style sculpture park in Litchfield County.

To that end, Tufte put up his prized collection of science, art, illustrated and design books—among them volumes by Galileo, Repton, William Playfair, John Henry Nash, and on statistical graphics, perspective, aviation, magic, epidemiology, and fish (to name a few of his very wide-ranging interests)—for auction at Christie’s in December. *AN* dropped by the Chelsea gallery to talk to Tufte about his books, his graphics, his intellectual inspirations and to ask him to explain what catches his eye and gets him thinking. Here are a few excerpts:

### On creative process:

The central thing in making good things is to be able to reason about what you are seeing and then produce. That’s the whole process of visual creation in any kind of design.

### On books, information, and value:

Authoritative books are universalizing; they are forever knowledge. They open up the experience space enormously beyond what’s happened in last three years, one year, or one minute.

We’re so overwhelmed with recent-cy bias; my view is that a day with Galileo is worth a visit to 10,000 websites. If the information is universal, why should what was done this week be better than something well chosen that was done way back? I am trying to rescue design and seeing from fashion and from Microsoft. And that means getting out into the rest of the world.

My access was by rare books—their design, the beauty of their thinking—and I thought of them as a museum of cognitive art where I looked for ideas exemplified, thinking exemplified, showing exemplified. It’s general theory extended from books written over the past 1200 years. And in writing I am interested in conveying that forever knowledge; I would never write a book about web design, as it, too, shall pass.

### On powerful graphics:

One of the early kinds of images that impressed me was dance notation. Here, you are trying to depict complex sound—because there’s music—and motion in three-dimensional space and over time. What better display problem is there? I wrote a lot about it in *Envisioning Information*, and then I found an incredible graphic that I used in *Beautiful Evidence* that brought everything together (Above, top, dance notation redrawn from *La Cuisse*, Cailleau & Mlle Castagnery, 1762-64).

This graphic shows square dancing notation with eight movements, three-dimensional drawing with some floor tracks, plus serious floor tracks, and then we have the music, the words, and it’s extended over time. Dance notation goes a long way back. It’s not actually very successful but it is beautiful and it has enormous complexity. It’s a universal problem of information but also of the architecture of information: How do you communicate to someone who isn’t there. In short, it’s a little miracle—and a very sweet topic.

In fact, most of my displays are very powerful emotionally. The examples are about very rich, clear information architectures but the content is usually very powerful—Napoleon’s march, dance notation, Galileo, slave ships.

The slave ship is unbelievable. (Above, *Case of The Vigilante, A Ship Employed in*

*the Slave-Trade* published for the Religious Society of Friends in London, 1823). Talk about fierce micro-economic optimization! That’s supposed to be the glory of market micro-economics, but it comes down to the packing of human beings. The image makes the point about the sterility—the cruelty—of microeconomics and its consequences. It’s showing how something that is usually favored—efficient markets—can also be ghastly in terms of human cost.

### On research, relevance, and reasoning:

I look at enormous amounts of images—and buildings and sculptures—and it may create the appearance that my work is inductive, that by looking at all the examples I find general principles. But I find the right examples because I have a theory, so in fact, it’s deductive.

I have principles that tell me something is going to be relevant: that it makes comparisons, that it talks about causality, that it has credibility, that it’s indifferent to the mode of information (words, numbers, etc); that it has a spirit of “whatever it takes”; and that it has more than two dimensions.

Since my interests are universal, I rely on forever experience not just today’s experience. Everyone is immersed in the experience of ‘now’ but for my world, the experience of a century ago is just as relevant, maybe even more relevant because it is fresher. Most people have never seen these graphics before. They are really off the wall, wonderful, and telling.



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